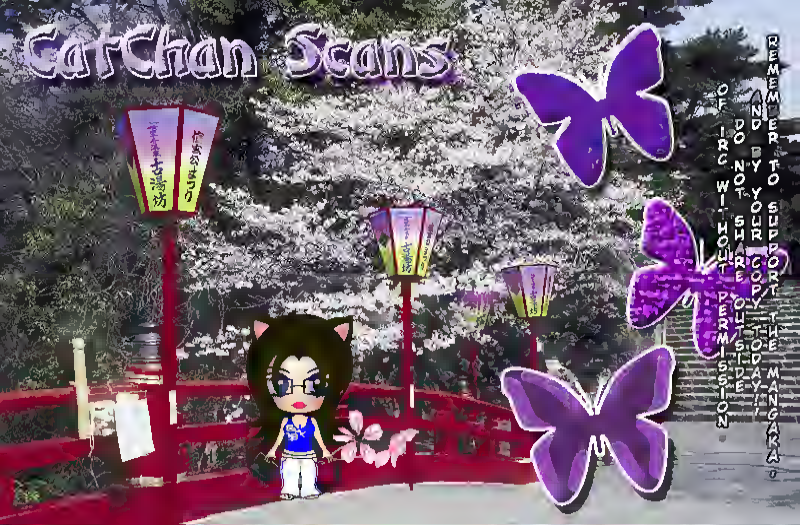

CatChan Scans
REMEMBER TO SUPPORT THE MANGAKA
AND BUY YOUR COPY OF THE GOD DAMN
DO NOT SHARE OUTSIDE OF IRC WITHOUT PERMISSION

crossroad

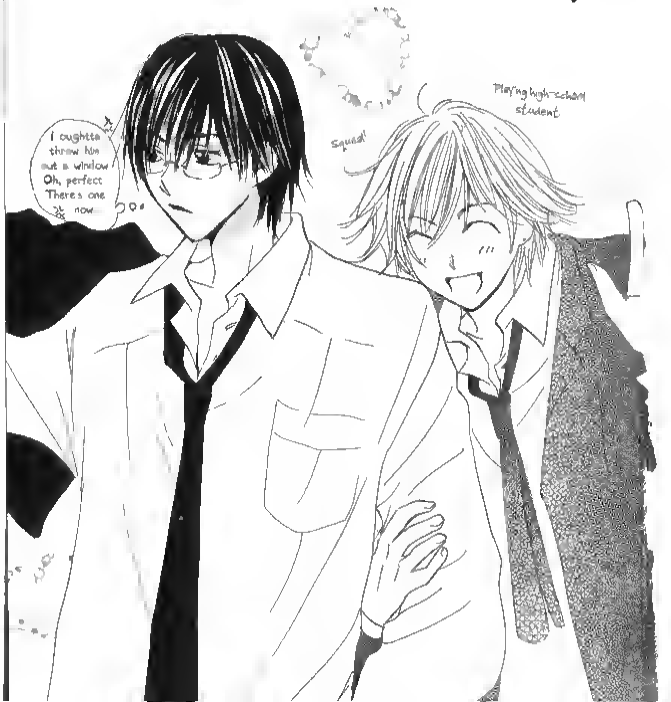
Story & Art by

SHIOKO MIZUKI

3

crossroad

3


I oughtta throw him out a window. Oh, perfect. There's one now.
Squad!
Playing high-school student

crossroad

story and art by
SHIOKO MIZUKI

volume 3

go!comi

Translation – Kathy Schilling
Adaptation – Audry Taylor
Lettering & Design – Eva Han
Production Assistant – Mallory Reaves
Production Manager – James Dashiell
Editor – Jake Forbes

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crossroad

The Story So Far...

Kajitsu, Taro, Natsu, and Satsuki are four step-siblings living with their irresponsible step-mom Rumiko. As Kajitsu and Natsu struggle against their deepening affections for each other, Kajitsu decides that she must find someone other than her own brother to love and sets out to find someone who can purge him from her mind. The steamy substitute teacher of the calligraphy class seems perfect for the job and before Kajitsu has had time to think, she finds herself on a date with her hot, (and potentially dangerous) teacher.

Cast of Characters

Nitta Mano
Kajitsu's classmate and best friend. She has a crush on Tokihito, but knows that Tokihito has a crush on Kajitsu, making the situation more complicated than she would like.

Imanakajima Tokihito
The son of a once distinguished family now in ruins. He has a secret crush on Kajitsu.

Akai-sensei
The substitute teacher for Kajitsu's calligraphy class. He doesn't exactly play by the rules: since he smokes on school grounds and flirts mercilessly with his student, Kajitsu.

Natsu
Kajitsu's "younger" brother, also 16. The highest ranking student at school, he gets a lot of unwanted attention from teachers and other students.

Kajitsu Toda
A 16-year old girl who constantly struggles to improve her pessimistic outlook on life.

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Concerning Honorifics

At Go! Comi, we do our best to ensure that our translations read seamlessly in English while respecting the original Japanese language and culture. To this end, the original honorifics (the suffixes found at the end of characters' names) remain intact. In Japan, where politeness and formality are more integrated into every aspect of the language, honorifics give a better understanding of character relationships. They can be used to indicate both respect and affection. Whether a person addresses someone by first name or last name also indicates how close their relationship is.

Here are some of the honorifics you might encounter in reading this book:

-san: This is the most common and neutral of honorifics. The polite way to address someone you're not on close terms with is to use "-san." It's kind of like Mr. or Ms., except you can use "-san" with first names as easily as family names.

-chan: Used for friendly familiarity, mostly applied towards young girls. "-chan" also carries a connotation of cuteness with it, so it is frequently used with nicknames towards both boys and girls (such as "Na-chan" for "Natsu").

-kun: Like "-chan," it's an informal suffix for friends and classmates, only "-kun" is usually associated with boys. It can also be used in a professional environment by someone addressing a subordinate.

-sama: Indicates a great deal of respect or admiration.

Sempai: In school, "sempai" is used to refer to an upperclassman or club leader. It can also be used in the workplace by a new employee to address a mentor or staff member with seniority.

Sensei: Teachers, doctors, writers or any master of a trade are referred to as "sensei." When addressing a manga creator, the polite thing to do is attach "-sensei" to the manga-ka's name (as in Mizuki-sensei).

Onii: This is the more casual term for an older brother. Usually you'll see it with an honorific attached, such as "onii-chan."

Onee: The casual term for older sister, it's used like "onii" with honorifics.

[blank]: Not using an honorific when addressing someone indicates that the speaker has permission to speak intimately with the other person. This relationship is usually reserved for close friends and family.

#12
The Naked Night

crossroad Chapter 12: The Naked Night

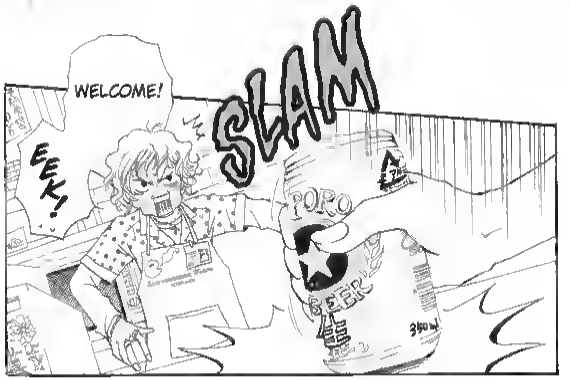
Nostalgia Time 1

I'm the kind of person who likes drawing night scenes, but this time around it was pretty hard. I wanted Kajitsu's clothing to look like something Rumiko would wear, so I kept muttering to myself, "Think Rumiko!" as I drew her. Later on, I was surprised to see the actor Sugimoto San-san wearing practically the same thing! Rumiko and San-san...I can totally see the resemblance (laugh). Kajitsu usually spends all her time complaining, and only at times like these (when she desperately needs feminine advice) does she listen to her step-mother. That's just how Kajitsu is (laugh).

IF I WERE TO...

...TAKE OFF...

...ALL THE COVERING AROUND MY HEART...



SHOVE
I SAID LOOK- OOMPH!
LOOK! LOOK!
SORRY, BUT I ALWAYS SWAT ANNOYING FLIES THAT BUZZ BY MY EAR
FLAP
FLAP
DRIP DRIP
THE BUILDINGS ARE GETTING SMALLER AND SMALLER! LOOK!
S-SORRY, SENSEI. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER BEEN TO A PLACE LIKE THIS...OR BEEN ALL DRESSED UP, FOR THAT MATTER...
IF YOU KEEP SQUEALING LIKE A BABY, I'M TAKING YOU HOME...

BARF
GLUG
*It's illegal for Kajitsu to drink at her age (20 in Japan)
AND NOW FOR A DRINK OF ENCOURAGEMENT!
DON'T THINK I CAN GO THROUGH WITH THIS SOBER
S-STILL A LITTLE TOO EARLY FOR THAT, I GUESS
NO MORE TRYING TO PLAY GROWN-UP
Heh heh heh...
Beer a tougher than I thought.
↑23
HUMMM
WE'RE GOING UP SO HIGH! INCREDIBLE! IT LOOKS LIKE A JEWELRY BOX DOWN THERE! SQUEAL!
OH MY GAWD! SENSEI, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS! IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL!

LISTEN, TODA-SAN
...IF YOU GO AROUND SAYING SUCH SUGGESTIVE THINGS TO JUST ANY GUY, THAT'S THE SORT OF RESPONSE YOU'LL GET.
YOU'RE THE ONE SAYING SUCH THINGS TO JUST ANY GIRL.
WHO'D GO AROUND
BUT I WASN'T SAYING IT TO JUST ANY GUY.
STUPID SENSEI!

I MEAN, I WONDER IF I MEET YOUR STANDARDS
OKAY WITH WHAT?
I WONDER IF I'LL BE OKAY
STARE
STARE
STARE
STARE
STARE
UH, SENSEI?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I THINK YOU'RE TOTALLY UP TO IT!
I SHOULD'VE RENTED A ROOM!
DAMN IT!

.SENSEI?
LISTEN .
?
YOU LOOKED REALLY COOL JUST NOW! ♡
IT MADE MY HEART SKIP A BEAT! ♡
I'M RELIEVED
THANK GOD THERE'S A CUTE SIDE TO YOUR PERSONALITY!

BONK
DO YOU WANT TO GO HOME NOW AFTER ONLY MAKING IT TO THE ELEVATOR!?
WHO YOU CALLIN' STUPID? DON'T FORGET WHO'S SPONSORING OUR LITTLE DATE!
SORRY
SLAM
SLAM
WHOA
HMPH
COME ON.
IT'S PITCH BLACK IN THERE
WHAT DO I DO?

I'M GOING HOME ALREADY?
...WANT TO STAY WITH YOU LONGER
BUT I...

BESIDES, I'D BEEN MEANING TO CHECK THAT PLACE OUT
WELL, I CAN'T SAY I WAS BORED
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
RIGHT, SENSEI? DID YOU HAVE A FUN TIME?
ONE OF MY DREAMS CAME TRUE! IT WAS THE BEST!
WOO!
Peace!
YOU READY TO HEAD HOME, NOW THAT YOU'RE SATISFIED?
GET IN.

...PIECE BY PIECE UNTIL MY SOUL STANDS NAKED IN FRONT OF HIM.

RUB
RUB
I'M FINALLY DONE WITH WORK
PHEW...
I JUST COULDN'T SAY NO IN THE END
PLEASE, NATSU-KUN! STAY ANOTHER TWO HOURS! NO, JUST ONE MORE IS FINE!

I CAN SAY ANYTHING I WANT TO SENSEI.
AND HE JUST LISTENS QUIETLY AS I TALK.

YOU'RE A GOOD KID.
I KEEP CONFESSING EVERYTHING TO HIM.
IT'S LIKE I'M TAKING OFF MY CLOTHES...

CLUB CLUB CLUB
Water
SO THIS IS HOW HE REALLY IS
ISN'T THIS USUALLY THE PART WHERE THE GUY GIVES THE GIRL HIS COAT WITHOUT BEING ASKED?
GO OUT OF MY WAY FOR YOU?
DON'T ACT SO SPOILED
You're the one who wanted to come here in the first place
WHY DO I HAVE TO.
WHAT A DRAG
THE VIEW'S GREAT FROM HERE, BUT IT'S A BIT CHILLY, HUH?
HMPH.
SENSEI, HAND OVER YOUR JACKET

I THINK I'VE CHANGED SINCE I MOVED HERE.
HAVE I REALLY BECOME SUCH A PUSH-OVER?
FINE, I'LL DO IT
Moving
For all your late night shifts!
It's all your overtime!
YES! THE BOY'S GOT LIFE IN HIM YET! TAKE THIS!
SHE MIGHT NOT BE COMING HOME AT ALL TONIGHT ♡
KAJITSU'S NOT HOME YET?
HUH?
I'm home!
It's already after 11
Tee hee! ♥
SHE'S OUT ON A DATE. ♡

NOT THAT I HAVE ANY BAD MEMORIES OF THEM.
EVERY GUY I'VE KNOWN
...SO WE DIDN'T MAKE AN EFFORT TO GET CLOSE TO THEM EITHER.
THEY USUALLY TOLD US THEY DIDN'T WANT TO DEAL WITH KIDS...
...HAS TURNED HIS BACK ON ME AND MY SIBS, YOU KNOW
FLAP
WEIRD, HUH?
BUT SOMEHOW ALL OF US TURNED OUT OKAY, ANYWAY.
SENSEI ...?
HA HA HA!
I SWEAR I WON'T DO IT ANYMORE!
I KNEW YOU'D HATE A STORY LIKE THAT!
JUST KIDDING!

YOU KNOW, SENSEI...
FLAP
Calm down!
I'M GOING TO FREEZE TO DEATH!
IT'S SO NICE AND WARM!♡
Heh heh!
Distance
Hee hee!
...YOU REMIND ME OF MY IDEAL FATHER ♡
I WAS SO YOUNG
I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT MY DAD LOOKED LIKE...
MAYBE I SHOULD DUMP HER HERE AND NOW

GOOD EVENING! SORRY FOR STOPPING BY SO LATE. ♡
I WAS JUST PASSING BY AND I SAW THE LIGHTS ON SO...
IS KAJITSU-SAN STILL UP?
I'M ON MY WAY BACK FROM MY JOB, ACTUALLY.
Then who could it be?
I THOUGHT SHE WAS WITH YOU.
KAJITSU'S NOT HOME NOW SHE'S OUT WITH A GUY
A GUY!?
WHAAAT!?
WH-WHO IS IT? DO YOU KNOW HIM? WHY? WHY???
UNTIL THIS HOUR OF NIGHT?

Toki Iro
Kajitsu
Natsu
Aitsuki

Diary

I DON'T KNOW
SO WHAT DO YOU WANT?
ER, IT'S
IT'S JUST THAT I LENT KAJITSU-SAN MY GEOLOGY NOTES EARLIER, BUT THEN REALIZED I STILL HAVE SOME HOMEWORK TO DO
BUT I GUESS IF SHE'S NOT HERE, I COULD ALWAYS WAIT UNTIL TOMOR-ROW...
IT'S NOT A PROBLEM
I'LL GO LOOK FOR IT NOW... JUST WAIT HERE
AH, HERE IT IS.
GEOLOGY
SEAL
DIARY?
Diary
OH!
OOPS!
FLUTTER
FLUTTER

W-WHO ARE YOU TO GET UP ON A SOAPBOX AND TELL PEOPLE WHAT THEY SHOULD DO WITH THEIR FEELINGS !?
WH-WH-WHAT DO YOU KNOW?
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
UNMANLY WEEPING!!
SHE DOESN'T EVEN TREAT ME LIKE A MAN, SO HOW WOULD YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL?
. CONFESSED TO KAJITSU?
BUT BECAUSE YOU CARE ABOUT HER SO MUCH, NATSU, SHE'S ABLE TO ..
TOKI-HITO ..
...WHY HAVEN'T YOU .

I'M SURE SHE'LL WHINE ALL NIGHT.
YOU SURE IT'S ALRIGHT IF I TAKE IT BACK?
FOUND IT.
WON'T SHE BE UPSET?
SHE DOES THAT..
BECAUSE SHE LOVES YOU SO MUCH
BUT DON'T WORRY. I'M USED TO IT
KAJITSU-SAN'S CHANGED A LOT
SINCE SHE STARTED LIVING WITH YOU GUYS
STUNNED
What the hell is he talking about?
OR SHOWING HER EMOTIONS
. HATED GETTING INVOLVED WITH OTHERS
THE KAJITSU I KNEW..

Older brother (20)
NATSU..
YOU MEAN YOU WERE...
Quiet blushing
NO.
COME NOW, NATSU. JOIN YOUR BRO IN THE BATH TONIGHT. IT'S BEEN AGES!
Why not? Why not?
STOMP STOMP STOMP
YOU MUST'VE BEEN HEARING THINGS.
...WAITING FOR YOUR BELOVED BIG BRO TO GET HO-ERK!
SMACK

Stupid Natsu-kun!
WHAAAA!
I'M A PATHETIC MARTYR! A WHIPPED REJECT! GOOD NIGHT!
I'M SURE YOU'LL GET A LOT OF LAUGHS OUTTA WATCHING ME SUFFER!
I'LL BE THE MAN IN THE SHADOWS WHO QUIETLY WATCHES OVER HER!
BUT I DON'T CARE HOW SHE TREATS ME!
Self-loathing
FORGIVE ME FELICIAL LORD.
DRIP DRIP
I GOT ANGRY AND HIT HIM RIGHT WHERE IT HURTS.
GREAT, I REALLY SCREWED THAT UP.
I'm home!
RATTLE RATTLE
!!
PEEK
AND YOU! YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT TIME IT IS!?
IF YOU WERE GOING TO BE HOME THIS LATE, YOU SHOULD'VE-

I REALLY GOTTA STOP THINKING THIS WAY!
AW DAMN!
BONK
BONK
BONK
BUT I'M STILL A KID, SO...
I OUGHTTA DIVE RIGHT IN WITHOUT THINKING!
..YOU'LL STOP ME, RIGHT SENSEI?
SQUEEZE

YES
Even took off his glasses.
I HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING YET.
TODA-SAN..
OH?
SENSEI..
...YOU'RE GOING TO BE LEAVING THE SCHOOL SOON, RIGHT?
..IS JUST TOO PAINFUL FOR ME
MAKING MEMORIES THAT WONDERFUL..
...WITH SOMEONE I KNOW IS LEAVING.

I'LL TAKE YOU HOME
COME ON, LET'S GO

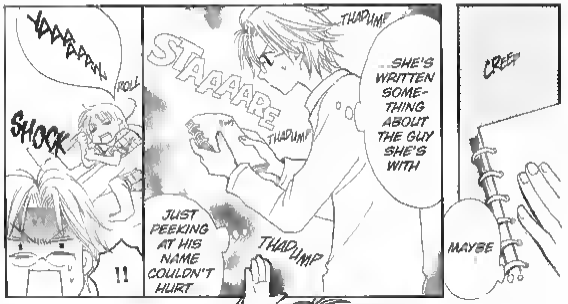
I PLANNED ON STUDYING ABROAD IN CHINA.
BUT I PUT IT OFF TOO LONG, SO I ENDED UP TEACHING CALLIGRAPHY TO A BUNCH OF IMMATURE BRATS.
THEN WHEN I WAS ASKED TO TAKE MY OLD MAN'S PLACE AT THE HIGH SCHOOL...
...I REALIZED I HAD NOTHING BETTER TO DO.
EVEN TAKING AN INTEREST IN YOU, TODA-SAN...
...WAS JUST ANOTHER WAY OF KILLING TIME.

I'M NOT USED TO ASKING FOR WHAT I WANT.
SO I'M JUST GONNA SAY WHATEVER COMES INTO MY HEAD
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO LET MYSELF BE SPOILED, SO PLEASE...
SCOLD ME FOR WANTING TO BE, OKAY?
IF I COME TO LIKE YOU SO MUCH...
...THAT IT STARTS TO HURT...
...STOP ME

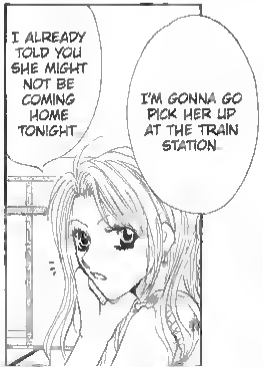
AND THEN...
...DISAPPEAR FROM MY LIFE IN A BEAUTIFUL, DRAMATIC WAY.

I GET FRUSTRATED JUST LOOKING AT YOU!
THANKS, SENSEI
HERE'S JUST FINE
OH MY GOD, LOOK OVER THERE! IT'S A U.F.O.!
HUH?
MY BROTHER WILL KILL ME IF HE SEES US TOGETHER
Hmm

DON'T MAKE ME SLAP YOU.
What's with this kid?
IS IT LOVE?
WHATEVER IT IS
...IT FEELS LIKE I'M LOSING A BATTLE
YOU'RE SO RESISTANT TO THE BAD THINGS...
...PEOPLE SAY, AND TO PAIN...
THOUGH I THINK I UNDERSTAND A LITTLE BETTER...
...JUST WHY IT WAS YOU I TOOK AN INTEREST IN.


YAAAAAAA!!
SHOCK
!!
STAAARE
THADUMP
THADUMP
JUST PEEKING AT HIS NAME COULDN'T HURT
THADUMP
SHE'S WRITTEN SOME-THING ABOUT THE GUY SHE'S WITH
CREEP
MAYBE

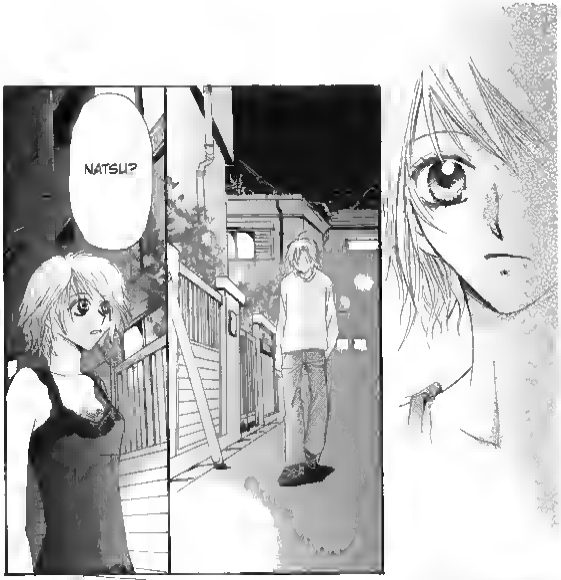
PEEKING AT A GIRL'S DIARY IS THE WORST THING A MAN COULD DO!
WHAT THE HECK AM I DOING?
WHOA!


I ALREADY TOLD YOU SHE MIGHT NOT BE COMING HOME TONIGHT
I'M GONNA GO PICK HER UP AT THE TRAIN STATION

THANK YOU, SATSUKI.
ONE MORE SECOND AND I WOULD'VE DONE A TERRIBLE THING.
You are a goddess!

SLAM
THANKS FOR WORRYING
IT'S NOT THAT, SILLY
Trust me, I watch my health
SENSEI, YOU SHOULD QUIT SMOKING
GOOD NIGHT!
IT'S JUST THAT I CAN'T STAND THE SMELL OF CIGARETTES

SHE'S ONE TOUGH LITTLE GIRL.
SHEESH.


NATSU?

WAIT WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE, NATSU?
MY FEET WERE STARTING TO HURT SO I
HUH?
Her hair is different so he didn't recognize her
Huh?
WHY ARE YOU BAREFOOT?

DON'T BE RIDICULOUS! SHE'S NOT AS STRONG AS YOU THINK!
SHE'LL BE JUST FINE
SHE KNOWS HOW TO HANDLE HERSELF
YOU WORRY-WART
SHE'LL BE HOME
SHE'D NEVER SPEND THE NIGHT OVER AT SOMEONE ELSE'S WITHOUT PERMISSION

SIGH
GUESS I WAS A LOT MORE NERVOUS THAN I THOUGHT
I WAS TOTALLY FINE UP UNTIL A MINUTE AGO
I'M NOT USED TO WEARING THEM. I'D RATHER GO BAREFOOT!
UGH! I CAN'T STAND THESE ANY LONGER! GET THESE HEELS OFF OF ME!
IT'S NOT FAR TO THE HOUSE ANYWAY
Off ya go!
TOSS TOSS

I KNOW
I DON'T THINK I'D BE ABLE TO SURVIVE
PROMISE ME YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE IF YOU WERE TO LEAVE..
.SO I WON'T LET YOU GO
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I NEVER WANT TO LOSE..
UH... THANKS?
Taro would fall in if he saw us now
I LOVE YOU, NATSU
BUT JUST THIS ONCE-- GOT IT?
I'LL CARRY YOU HOME
GET ON
OH!
YOU HAD ME WORRIED SICK!
Why else would I be out here?
I WAS ON MY WAY TO PICK YOU UP!
NOT IN THE WAY YOU THINK
YOU WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME?
..WHENEVER I'M FEELING VULNERABLE...
SIGH ..

#13 Short-Sleeves

...I'M SURE I WAS BORN..
MY NAKED HEART FOLLOWS NATSU WITHOUT WAVERING.
I KNOW
...TO BE HERE NOW.

crossroad Chapter 13: Short Sleeves

Feelings of Nostalgia 2

Why is it that every time I write Subaru and Natsu's conversations, the mood gets virginal? Ever since I used to watch two boys in my neighborhood cling to each other affectionately on the way home from school, my vision of close male relationships has gone way over the top. School uniforms & love.. (laugh) To get off-subject, Akita dogs are pretty big and scary and eat a LOT; so I always think of them as the type of dog that could become a police man or civil worker. No doubt being chased by one of them would give you nightmares for weeks. I wonder if you'd die if it bit you? So amazing is the Akita dog. Woof!

NATSU WAS ALWAYS THERE ..
WHENEVER I WAS FEELING LONELY, OR IN PAIN, OR SAD..
...OR HOPELESS
I was on my way to pick you up!
...HE'S ALWAYS THE ONE WHO SAVES ME.
WHEN I'M FEELING LOST

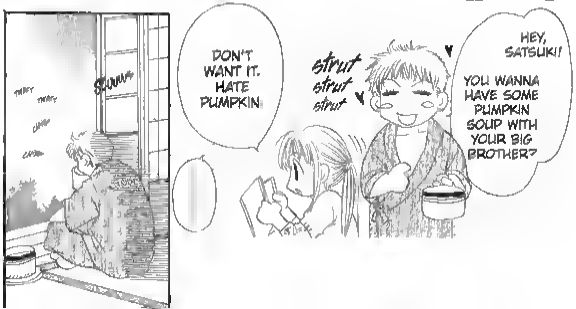
...IT SUITS YOU AT ALL
I AGREE
I DON'T THINK...
WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW? ANSWER ME!
EXCUSE ME? JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK I'M SUPPOSED TO LOOK LIKE?
BLOWING HER TOP
GRR
WHAT THE--!?
I TOTALLY AGREE!♡
Ha ha ha!
WHY'S SHE SO GOOD TO YOU, NATSU!? SOMETHING HAPPEN BETWEEN YOU TWO?
NO
ONII-CHAN, IF NO ONE'S GOING TO EAT THE SOUP, THEN YOU CAN HAVE IT!
I'M OFF TO THE BEAUTY PARLOR!
YOU LITTLE--!
DASH

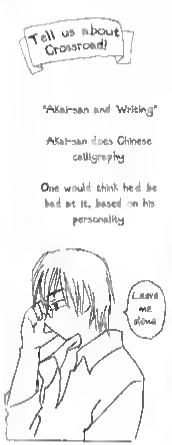
I DON'T WANT IT.
I THOUGHT YOU HATED PUMPKIN
Tee hee!
Tee hee!
WANT SOME? WANT SOME?
I GOT THE PUMPKIN FROM OUR NEIGHBOR, HASHIMOTO-SAN, BUT HIS SON TOTALLY CAME ON TO ME LIKE A PERV AND CREEPED ME OUT! ANYWAY, I MIXED UP THE INGREDIENTS THOROUGHLY AND SIMMERED IT UNTIL IT WAS JUST RIGHT, SO IT SHOULD BE REALLY GOOD!
IT'S NUTRITIOUS AND GOOD FOR THE BRAIN!
Tee hee!♡
HEY.
OH.
IT'S PROBABLY TAINTED BY THAT PERV'S ESSENCE, ANYWAY. IF YOU ATE IT, IT MIGHT KILL YOUR BRAIN POWER!
SNIFF SNIFF
I MEAN, OH YES, OF COURSE! PUMPKIN ISN'T TASTY AT ALL!♡
Sooo sorry
SHUT UP, WOULD YA'?
This is my day off for crying out loud!
GRUMBLE GRUMBLE
HEEEEY! WHAT'S WITH THE ATTITUDE!?
Aaargh!
AND OH, THAT NEW HAIR STYLE DOESN'T FIT YOU AT ALL!
IT DOESN'T REFLECT YOUR PERSONALITY!
HAVE A GLASS OF WATER INSTEAD.
THAT LOOKS DELICIOUS! I WOULDN'T MIND A BITE!
Mmm!♡

AUUUGH!
I'M SO LONELY!!
...NATSU ENDS UP BEING SO COLD!?
HA HA. JUST WHY IS IT.
...THAT AFTER SUCH A ROMANTIC NIGHT...
huff
huff
huff
Dramatic Line

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO!
THEN AGAIN, WHAT IF HE'S GETTING EVEN COLDER THAN BEFORE?
WHY AM I SO UPSET? I KNOW HE'S A SERIOUS GUY! I CAN'T EXPECT HIM TO GET ALL LOVEY-DOVEY WITH ME OUT OF THE BLUE!

WE'RE JUST. ..CLOSE
JUST YOUR AVERAGE BROTHER AND SISTER
Sheesh


Slump
DON'T WANT IT. HATE PUMPKIN
strut strut strut
HEY, SATSUKI! YOU WANNA HAVE SOME PUMPKIN SOUP WITH YOUR BIG BROTHER?

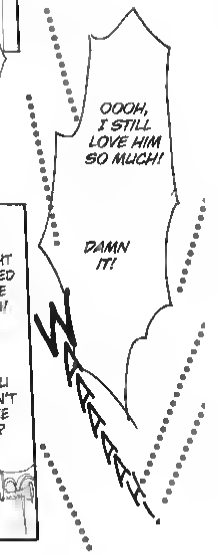

Tell us about Crossroad!
"Akai-san and Writing"
Akai-san does Chinese calligraphy
One would think he'd be bad at it, based on his personality
Leave me alone

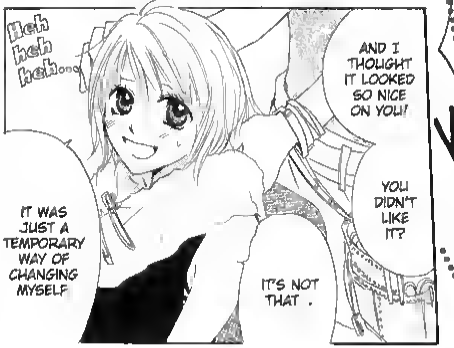
THIS SORT OF CHANGE IS.
SOMETHING I'D ONLY DO ONCE IN A WHILE
SENSEI WILL EVENTUALLY FORGET ABOUT YESTERDAY.

BUT FOR ME .
...I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT ONE MOMENT WHERE I FELT MY HEART SKIP

WELCOME-
IF IT ISN'T KAJITSU-CHAN WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU WERE JUST HERE YESTERDAY.
I'M SO SORRY KUWAHARA-KUN!
I'VE DECIDED TO GO BACK TO MY ORIGINAL STYLE!
SOB
SOB
AAW, THAT'S TOO BAD
YOU WANT IT BACK TO NORMAL ?

WAAAH! STUPID NATSU!


OOOH, I STILL LOVE HIM SO MUCH!
DAMN IT!


Heh heh heh...
AND I THOUGHT IT LOOKED SO NICE ON YOU!
YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT?
IT'S NOT THAT .
IT WAS JUST A TEMPORARY WAY OF CHANGING MYSELF

.....
I COULD'VE GUESSED!
OH HO, HO! SO IT'S LIKE THAT, HUH?
YEAH, SHE'S OLDER, AND MARRIED
A FRIEND THEN? SEMPAI?
I WOULDN'T EXACTLY CALL HER A GIRL-FRIEND
IS SHE YOUR GIRLFRIEND FROM YOUR LAST SCHOOL?

SHE'S MY AUNT.
WITH SOMEONE ELSE'S WIFE!? THAT'S ADULTERY!!
WHAAAAT!?
WE USED TO LIVE TOGETHER.
You were too misleading!
Ouch
Inner pain
Hey, I never actually lied

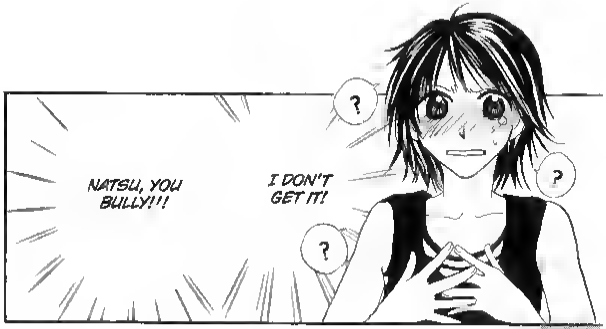
CLATCH
THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME
HE'LL STILL BE IMPORTANT TO ME EVEN AFTER HE'S GONE
NATSU!!
ARE YOU GOING OUT?

GIRL!?
IS IT A BOY OR A GIRL?
GIRL
I'M GOING TO THE STATION TO MEET SOME-ONE
YEAH, JUST FOR A BIT

Enraged Elitist
YOU...
. IDIOT!
PUT YOUR HAND ON YOUR CHEST AND THINK ABOUT IT!
IDIOT?
WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY, NATSU?
I DON'T GET IT! JUST TELL ME!
IN A RAGE
STOMP STOMP
Oh no, there he goes...
BUT WHY?
SURE I'M AN IDIOT, BUT--
BOY, HE REALLY IS ANGRY.
WHY DO I GET THE FEELING..
...HE WAS TOYING WITH ME?
LATER, THEN
BUT YOU'VE BEEN COLD TO ME ALL MORNING! AND BLUNT!
I HAVE NOT
H-HEY, NATSU! WHY ARE YOU SO UPSET?
I'M NOT UPSET
どおおおん
THOOOOM
ANGER
ANGER
EEEK!
YOU'RE ANGRY!
IS IT BECAUSE I SAID I LOVED YOU?
I WON'T SAY IT, IF YOU DON'T WANT ME TO
IF THAT'S IT, THEN I WON'T SAY IT ANYMORE!

SUBARU..

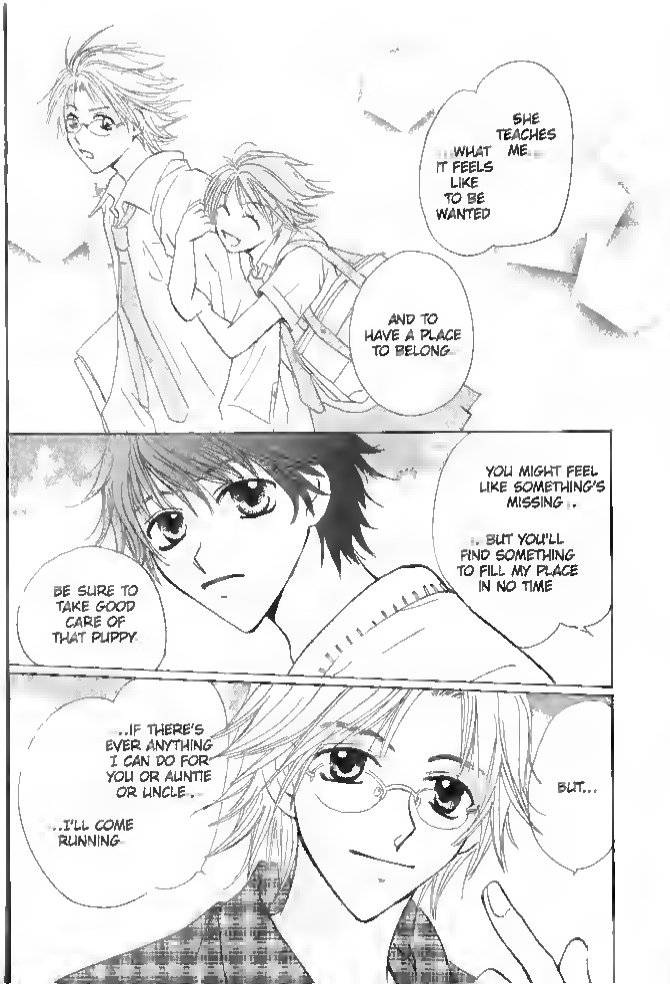
I'M SURPRISED BECAUSE I WAS EXPECTING AUNTIE TO COME
YOU LOOK GOOD SUBARU
DID YOU START TANNING?
SORRY
I SAID I'D SEND IT AS A DELIVERY BUT...


NATSU, YOU BULLY!!!
I DON'T GET IT!
?
?
?

NATSU...
PAT
CHATTER
CHATTER
CHATTER

I'VE BEEN MEANING TO APOLOGIZE TO YOU PROPERLY.
I'M OKAY NOW.
WE THOUGHT HE'D FILL YOUR SPACE
HE'S GONNA GET PRETTY BIG.
Why did you stop those two?
BUT IT DIDN'T WORK
NATSU, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN EVER FILL THAT SPACE AGAIN
THERE'S NO SUBSTITUTE FOR YOU
SO.
...I WANT TO LIVE...
...WITH YOU AGAIN

YOINK
I BROUGHT ALL THE SHORT-SLEEVED SHIRTS I COULD
SHORT-SLEEVES!
I JOINED THE TRACK TEAM
I SEE YOU'RE STILL WEARING SHIRTS WITH LONG SLEEVES
YOU CAN HARDLY SEE THE SCARS ANYMORE
I'LL BE TAKING OFF THE LONG ONES NOW.
IT'S ALMOST SUMMER ANYWAY
BACK AT HOME...
WE JUST BOUGHT A NEW DOG
HE'S AN AKITA PUPPY


SHE TEACHES ME...
...WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO BE WANTED
AND TO HAVE A PLACE TO BELONG...
YOU MIGHT FEEL LIKE SOMETHING'S MISSING...
...BUT YOU'LL FIND SOMETHING TO FILL MY PLACE IN NO TIME
BE SURE TO TAKE GOOD CARE OF THAT PUPPY.
...IF THERE'S EVER ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU OR AUNTIE OR UNCLE...
...I'LL COME RUNNING.
BUT...

I'VE GOT A PATHETIC BIG SISTER AT HOME...
EVERY DAY'S A CHALLENGE, BUT I LIKE IT.
...WHO MAKES ME EMBARRASSING BOXED LUNCHES EVERY DAY.
Bears again?
Reminder to Natsu: Bring a towel!
EVEN MY PATHETIC BIG SISTER...
...STILL HAS SO MUCH TO TEACH ME
AND WORRIES ABOUT EVERY LITTLE THING...
...AND KEEPS COMING BACK EVEN AFTER I'VE PUSHED HER AWAY.
Where you goin Natsu?
The bathroom! Jeez, you're annoying!
SORRY BUT I'M...
...NOT GOING ANYWHERE

The door will be closing shortly.
Please watch your step.
PSSSSSSH
SHUT
THANKS FOR COMING TO SEE ME
I REALLY APPRECIATE IT.
IT'S NOT THAT
IT'S THAT YOU WERE ALWAYS THE ONE SAVING ME
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
NOW THEN...

IT MAY NOT BE MUCH, BUT.
...I WANT TO BE A HELP TO EVERYONE THAT'S ALL.
SEE YOU LATER
SAY HELLO TO YOUR PARENTS FOR ME.
...I REALLY CAN'T COMPETE WITH KAJITSU.
SURE
I'VE BEEN TRYING HARD TO THINK OF A WAY, BUT NOW I SEE—

NO WAY! I'D NEVER WANT THAT! BUT..
...I KNOW HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO HAVE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT'S CONDUCIVE TO...
WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR EDUCATION AND YOUR FUTURE...
SO IF IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU...
...I...
YOU OVERHEAT WHEN YOU THINK TOO HARD
Uh oh
pure pure pure
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL...
THINK ABOUT IT.
WHOAAA!
WAAAAH!
strut
strut
strut

NATSU, I'M SORRY! PLEASE! I GIVE UP!
WHY ARE YOU SO ANGRY? IS IT BECAUSE OF ALL THAT "I LOVE YOU" BUSINESS? OR BECAUSE I'M DEPRESSING?
YEAH.

HMPH
YOU EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO CHANGE YOUR HAIR STYLE
I BEHAVED TOO MUCH LIKE A DUMB KID!
I REALIZE NOW THAT I WAS MAKING TOO BIG A DEAL OUT OF IT! I TOTALLY REGRET IT!
SIGH
SIGH
SIGH
I KNEW IT WAS THAT!
DAMN IT!

Whoa!
LET'S GO HOME KAJITSU!
I CAN READ YOUR EVERY MOVE
Hmph
HOW LONG DID YOU KNOW-
You knew the whole time, didn't you?

I WAS AFRAID..
WITH ALL THE LETTERS AND PHONE CALLS YOU'VE BEEN GETTING LATELY...
IT'S JUST THAT I WAS WORRIED!
DO YOU WANT ME TO?
I WAS AFRAID YOU'D GO BACK TO YOUR OLD HOUSE

THUD THUD THUD THUD
WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?
WAIT! NATSU! WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY!?
I'LL HAVE TO TRY FLYING!
TMP
IF I CAN'T CATCH UP WITH YOU BY RUNNING..
..THEN YOU LEAVE ME NO CHOICE..
HUH?
THUD
WHOA!

TMP TMP TMP
NO WAY
TMP TMP
AND THEN YOU WENT ON A DATE WITH SOME STRANGE GUY!
DASH
NATSU, DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE JEALOUS!?

I GOT SWEATY FROM ALL THAT RUNNING
THAT'S BECAUSE I LEFT THEM ALL AT THE OLD HOUSE
HERE, HOLD THIS
FLAP
HUH?
FREEZE
GETTING CHANGED
WH-WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
AAAAGH!
QUIT SOAKING MY SHIRT WITH YOUR DROOL
Your eyes look like dinner plates
Oh...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO-
I'M IN HEAVEN!
STARE
CHEW
B-B-BUT HERE OF ALL PLACES--!

For the love of God
GET OFFA ME...
HUG
THIS IS LOVE I'M NEVER LETTING YOU GO NOW
WHAT THE--? A DECOY!
For real?
GASP
CHATTER
SHORT-SLEEVE SHIRTS?
Dunno!
GASP
QUIT LOOKING THROUGH THAT!
I'VE NEVER SEEN YOU WEAR SHORT-SLEEVES BEFORE
YOU KNOW, NATSU
THEY'RE ALL... SHORT-SLEEVE

IS SO BRIGHT.

OH!
THAT'S RIGHT!
SWAP
SWAP
SWAP
SWAP
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE

KAJITSU...
TODAY..
...IS TOO HOT

AND THE SUN..

PEOPLE AND MEMORIES EVENTUALLY DISAPPEAR
...JUST HOW REASSURING...
WHAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT
AND IMPORTANT THAT IS TO ME.
IS BEING HERE NOW
GRANDMA
SUMMER'S FINALLY ARRIVED
THIS IS MY FIRST SUMMER.
WITHOUT GRANNY HERE

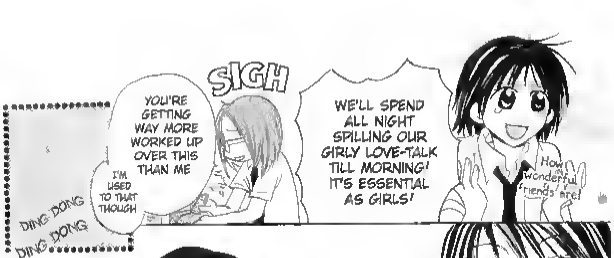
THE LETTERS I NEVER SENT TO NATSU.
CRACKLE
SNAP
GRANNY! PLEASE WATCH OVER HIM
All right!
THE LOVE LETTERS I NEVER GAVE HIM
I DON'T NEED THOSE MEMORIES ANYMORE
I'm not going anywhere.
BECAUSE NATSU'S HERE WITH ME NOW
NOW I UNDERSTAND.

DID SOMETHING HAPPEN OVER VACATION?
KAJITSU-CHAN
YEAH, BUT I CAN'T TALK ABOUT IT HERE
OH MY GOD! TELL ME!
It's supposed to be quiet
mumble mumble
CALLIGRAPHY
LET'S HAVE A SLEEPOVER AT MY HOUSE SOME TIME!
OH! KAJITSU-CHAN!
IT'S LIKE WE'RE REALLY GIRL FRIENDS!
YOU REALLY MEAN IT?
HUH?
HUH?

IT'S SO BRIGHT.
IT'S SO PRECIOUS.

I QUIT SMOKING
OH, YOU NOTICED?
MY MOUTH WAS GETTING LONELY
Y-YES, SIR!
FOCUS! FOCUS!
WHISPER

REALLY? WHY DID YOU QUIT?
I can't stand the smell
Sensei, you should quit smoking.
SHE SAID SHE COULDN'T STAND THE SMELL OF CIGARETTES
DID HE ACTUALLY LISTEN TO ME? MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE SAID THAT


DING DONG DING DONG
I'M USED TO THAT THOUGH
YOU'RE GETTING WAY MORE WORKED UP OVER THIS THAN ME
SIGH
WE'LL SPEND ALL NIGHT SPILLING OUR GIRLY LOVE-TALK TILL MORNING! IT'S ESSENTIAL AS GIRLS!
How wonderful friends are!

GLANCE
SENSEI
. IS STILL AS RESERVED AS EVER
LIKE NOTHING HAPPENED
Stop this weepy act, he top
Super-Pl... ces like his

HMM?
AKAI-SENSEI, ARE YOU EATING CANDY?
EVEN THOUGH IT WAS A HUGE NIGHT FOR ME
Maybe I stop by later and thank him
He'll get angry if I say anything now

HE WAS JUST SUPPOSED TO BE
A BEAUTIFUL, FLEETING...
WHICH MEANS I WILL OFFICIALLY BE TAKING HIS PLACE AS THIS SCHOOL'S CALLIGRAPHY INSTRUCTOR!
SO IT'LL BE A PLEASURE WORKING WITH YOU.
...FOR A LONG TIME
...MEMORY.
Yaaay!
YAAAY!
Yippee!
Soma girls
THIS CAN'T BE REAL!
He's smiling. He must be plotting something...
THIS...

A GIRL I LIKE, I MEAN
Woo-hoo! Tell us about her!
We're so curious!
WAIT-
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
SQUEAL
Your girlfriend? What's she like?
SQUEAL
WAIT JUST A MINUTE!
AND THAT'S NOT ALL
MY OLD MAN, WHO'S BEEN UNDER MEDICAL TREATMENT, IS STARTING TO FEEL THE LIMITS OF HIS PHYSICAL ABILITIES.
SO HE'S DECIDED TO ENTER RETIREMENT THIS MONTH
...FOR A FEW MONTHS AS A TEMPORARY SUBSTITUTE.
SENSEI WAS ONLY SUPPOSED TO BE STAYING HERE..
?
?

#14 Your Blue (Part One)

"CROSSROAD" VOLUME 2 HITS STORES DECEMBER 11 (THURSDAY)!
YO THERE! HOW'S EVERYBODY FEELIN', BROTHERS OF THE NATION?
BRAVO!
CM
Sneak Attack!! Onii-chan Takes the Scene!!
A bonus manga written in celebration Volume 2 going on sale!
THIS WAS FOR the Japanese audition.
crossroad2
Now printing
Let your love rain down on me!
HA HA HA HA HA
IF YOU LOVE ME...
...THEN BUY IT!
HAVE YOU PLACED AN ORDER AT YOUR NEAREST BOOK-STORE?
HAVE YOU CHECKED YOUR CALENDAR YET?
12
Hello
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "EITHER WAY"?
EITHER WAY I'LL STILL BUY IT.

This is the advertisement I wrote for Princess (the magazine that publishes "Crossroad" in Japan). I thought it'd be fun to leave some space here to advertise the release of volume 2 as a tankobon. (I've really been looking forward to it!) I want to do it for volume 3, too, but we'll have to wait and see.

I really liked this one so I kept it. Heh heh.

Mmm.

The End

crossroad Chapter 16: Your Blue (Part One)

Akai-san's currently guilding something.
I THOUGHT YOU'D BE HAPPIER
AKAI-SENSEI, WHO WAS JUST SUPPOSED TO BE A TEMPORARY SUBSTITUTE...
...HAS OFFICIALLY BECOME THE NEW CALLIGRAPHY TEACHER
HUH.
I'M SHOCKED

Feelings of Nostalgia 5

A hole opened up in one of my molars, so after work I stopped by the dentist's office. He told me, "The tooth's set in sideways, so let's take him out." I hate when teeth get like that, so I was happy to see it go. But I still have two like that left in there. Sheesh. Anyway, after he yanked it out, the inside of my mouth was all bloody and it felt gross. But for some reason, I suddenly had the urge to eat meat, and even though I'd been told not to eat while my mouth was still numb, I ran out to the closet Karubi-niku place!* The smell of the plate drew me in. It was like, meat! Meat! Meat! I'm sure they thought I was a savage or something.

*See translators notes at the back of the book.

SLAM
WELL YOU HAD YOUR MOUTH HANGING OPEN ANYWAY IT WAS EASY TO PUT IN
PLEASE STOP DOING THINGS LIKE THIS ALL THE TIME!
Now he's angry
SENSEI! KNOCK IT OFF!
BLUSH
TREMBLE
TREMBLE

GRR
GRR
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?
IS IT REALLY THAT MUCH TROUBLE FOR ME TO LIKE YOU?

Tell us Crossroad!
"Natsu's Short-Sleeves"
Natsu has now started wearing short-sleeved shirts.
But his school uniform is still a collared shirt with longer sleeves.
This is... aesthetics.
I guess that's how it is.

"A GIRL I LIKE."
THIS IS PRETTY SWEET
"I JUST CAN'T STAND IT."
YOU TOLD ME TO QUIT, DIDN'T YOU?
SENSEI, DID YOU REALLY GIVE UP SMOKING?
HE'S BEING SO FAKE
Huh?

SLAM
TODA-SAN
YUCK, IT'S TOO SWEET
SENSEI! YOU'RE JUST TEASING ME AGAIN, AREN'T YOU!?

BLUSH
BU
YOU HAVE IT.
HUH?

...LIKE
AAAAAAAAH!!
STOP
I'M JUST TRYING TO MAKE YOU INTO A WOMAN
AAAAH! I WAS A FOOL TO TRUST YOU!
That tickles!
Aaah
AAACK! GRANNY! GRANNY!
Help me!
THIS IS ACTUALLY TURNING ME ON
Sex mode!
LIKE? LIKE WHAT, HUH?
TRY TELLING ME! COME ON!!
THIS IS PRETTY FUN!

RAN
IT TOOK ME A LONG TIME TO SUMMON UP THE COURAGE TO TELL YOU HOW I FEEL, AND THIS IS HOW YOU REACT!
OKAY, NOW I KNOW THAT'S A LIE.
AND YOU WERE THE FIRST WOMAN I EVER LOVED, TOO.
How shameless
Whoa...
YOU. .
I'M NOT ANGRY! IN FACT, MY HEART IS WEEPING!
TURN
.DON'T HAVE TO GET SO UPSET!
WORRY
WORRY
WORRY
WORRY

I'M SURE SENSEI WAS JUST JOKING AROUND WITH ME
I GUESS I SHOULDN'T OVERREACT LIKE THAT.
HE'S ALWAYS SO NICE
I JUST .
I JUST.. REALLY RESPECT YOU AND.
I'M SORRY, SENSEI
HE'S NOT REALLY A BAD GUY
I TRUST HIM

?
?
IT'S QUIET.
I've got a bad feeling.
IS SOMETHING NASTY GOIN' ON IN THERE BETWEEN YOU 'N A HOT GIRL, HMMM?
(VOICE LIKE A BOGEYMAN)
DROOP
SLAM
BONK
PATTER
COMPER
DON'T FORGET TO INCLUDE ME, AKAI!
THAT PERV'S GONNA EAT HER ALL UP!
I'll freeze the croquets for later!
What'll he say?
What's up?
HA HA HA!
HEY THERE NUMBER ONE
YOU MAKE IT OUT OKAY? I WAS SO WORRIED!
How about a croquet?
LIKE HELL YOU WERE!

What's up?
HUH?
THE DOOR'S CLOSED
BUMP
CLATTER
NO, I'M NOT!
OOOH, SO YOU'RE IN THE MOOD NOW, HUH? I'M GLAD!
I BROUGHT SOME CRAB CREAM CROQUET FROM COOKING CLASS.
THUD
THUD
THUD
THUD
AKAI? YOU IN THERE?
GRIN
ERK!
AAAH! TOMA! SAVE ME-
SMOTHER
SMOTHER
SMOTHER
Sounds like fun

KAJITSU-CHAN! OVER HERE! OVER HERE!
Come here!
THE BOYS FROM CLASS 1 ARE HAVING GYM OUTSIDE!
ME! ME!
WHO ELSE WANTS TO GO SHOPPING?
Get me some THIN chocolate!
Get it yourself!
Please sit quietly and do your own self-studying.
And no leaving the classroom!
WHAT A CUTE CLASS!
Yeeeees!
DROOP
SLAM
Snore
CHATTER
Gotta read it!
YES!♡
Maner-chan! Let's go up to the roof!
NOW TO CONTINUE WITH LAST WEEK'S MANGA!♡
Huh?
CLASS I? THAT MEANS NATSU!
REALLY?
LET ME SEE!

AW MAN
HA HA HA
CAN'T BELIEVE SHE GOT SO PISSED SHE WENT HOME! DON'T YOU THINK YOU THREATENED HER A LITTLE TOO MUCH?
SHE MIGHT NOT COME BACK YOU KNOW
NAH, I HIGHLY DOUBT THAT
I KNOW BECAUSE

SOB
SOB
I SWEAR I'LL GET BACK AT HIM FOR THIS SOMEDAY!
DING DONG
DING DONG
DAMN IT! HE TOYED WITH ME AGAIN!
MONTH DAY XXX- SENSEI IS ON BREAK, SO SELF-STUDY

JUST BE CAREFUL YOU DON'T GET DISMISSED FOR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR
SHE'S AN M TYPE
S TYPE

HEY
YOU'RE SO ANNOYING!
NO I'M NOT! NOT AT ALL!
OOOH MY! ♡
SAY IT AGAIN! ♡
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT! ♡
YOU'RE ONLY FLATTERING ME! ♡
COME ON, MANO-CHAN! LET'S CHEER THEM ON FROM THE GROUND!
DASH
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? SKIPPING CLASS?
GO HOME THEN!
WE'RE RUNNING 400 METERS TODAY
CHEER US ON?
TOTALLY!
HEY! LET'S HAVE TODA-SAN ARRANGE AN OUTING WITH ALL THE CLASS 1 BOYS!
Boyfriend
What did you just say?
Guest #2

YOU'VE GOTTEN SO SERIOUS ABOUT HIM, IT'S ALMOST SCARY
AND HE LOOKS SO HOT IN THAT GYM UNIFORM! ♡
THEY'RE LIKE BEAUTIFUL WILDFLOWERS FOUND ONLY ON A HIGH CLIFF.
THAT CLASS 1 IS THE BEST
TODA-SAN, YOU'RE SUCH A LUCKY BRAT!
AND THE HIGHEST ONE IS YOUR LITTLE BROTHER!
BOY
Guest appearance.
I HATE HAVING SOMEONE RUNNING IN FRONT OF ME
WHAT ARE YOU, A PRINCE?
A RACE? GIVE ME A BREAK.
OH MY GOD, IT'S NATSU! ♡
HE LOOKS JUST LIKE A WANDERING SAMURAI! ♡
with that hairstyle

SO...
PIEW
LINE UP BOYS!
OH!
SORRY, I HAVE TO GET GOING
S-SURE.

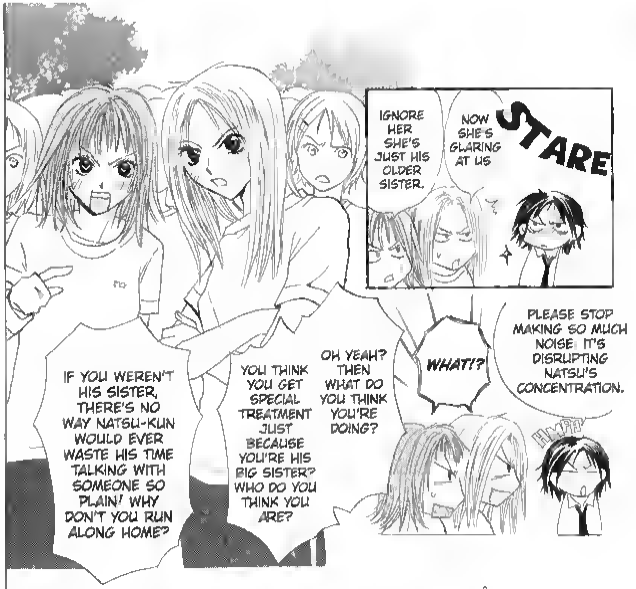
HEE HEE! IT'S A SECRET!
MAYBE I BUTTED IN TOO MUCH.
You were looking at me!
KAJITSU-CHAN!
WHAT WERE YOU GUYS TALKING ABOUT?

OKAY, SO MANO-CHAN'S WATCHING TOO, GOT IT? THIS COULD BE YOUR CHANCE!
SNEAK SNEAK
HUH?
THUMP
SHOW HER YOU'RE A MAN!
SOUNDS LIKE SOMETHING AN OLD WOMAN WOULD SAY!

ME?
IT'S A SELF-STUDY PERIOD! THINGS WILL BE MORE EXCITING WITH A BIGGER CROWD, RIGHT?
COME HERE FOR A MINUTE, TOKIHITO-KUN

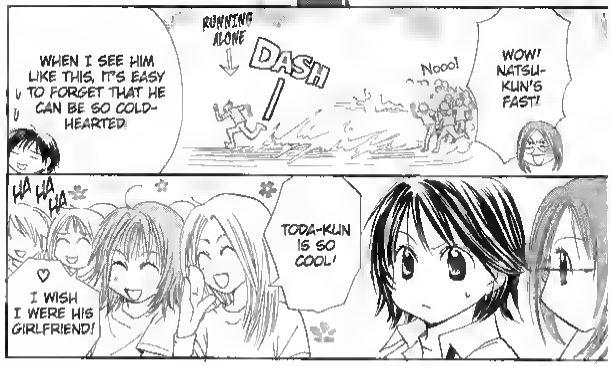
KAJITSU-SAN...
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY?
Wonder what they're talking about...
MANO-CHAN'S A GOOD GIRL! I CAN VOUCH FOR THAT! SHE'S KIND, SENSIBLE, AND CUTE!

I'D BE THRILLED TO SEE BOTH OF YOU HAPPY!
I LIKE BOTH OF YOU SO YOU TWO SHOULD GO OUT!
YOU SHOULD GO OUT WITH HER!
Heh heh!
PAT


IGNORE HER. SHE'S JUST HIS OLDER SISTER.
NOW SHE'S GLARING AT US
STARE
IF YOU WEREN'T HIS SISTER, THERE'S NO WAY NATSU-KUN WOULD EVER WASTE HIS TIME TALKING WITH SOMEONE SO PLAIN! WHY DON'T YOU RUN ALONG HOME?
YOU THINK YOU GET SPECIAL TREATMENT JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE HIS BIG SISTER? WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
OH YEAH? THEN WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
WHAT!?
PLEASE STOP MAKING SO MUCH NOISE. IT'S DISRUPTING NATSU'S CONCENTRATION.
HMPH

LIH OH
SCREECH
LOOKS LIKE A CAT FIGHT
Hey, what are you girls doing over there?
BONK
SQUEAL
huff
huff
huff
OH NO!
STOP IT, KAJITSU-CHAN! CALM DOWN!
No matter how you look at it, we were at fault!
Go Home!
Go Home!
Yet again!
EXCUSE ME?
SMACK
WHAT WAS THAT!?
AAAAH!
Go Home!
Go Home!

Damn it, he's fast!
WOO-HOO! GO, NATSU! YOU LOOK JUST LIKE A PAPER DELIVERY BOY! KEEP IT UP! ♡
SHE'S A BUSY GIRL
RUB
RUB
BUT ALL I WANT IS FOR MANO-CHAN TO BE HAPPY!
I COULDN'T THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE TO DO!
YOU'RE NOT FOOLING ME!
LOOK! NATSU-KUN'S RUNNING!
I LOVE YOU! ♡
OH, MANO-CHAN YOU'RE SO CUTE!
HUG


WHEN I SEE HIM LIKE THIS, IT'S EASY TO FORGET THAT HE CAN BE SO COLD-HEARTED.
RUNNING ALONE
DASH!
Nooo!
WOW! NATSU-KUN'S FAST!
HA HA HA
I WISH I WERE HIS GIRLFRIEND! ♡
TODA-KUN IS SO COOL!

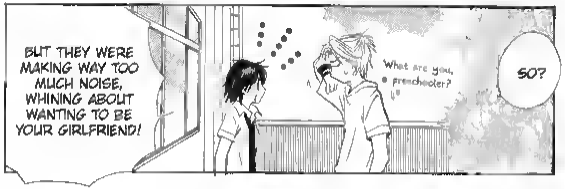
UH...
TOKIHITO-KUN.
HERE'S A TOWEL
KAJITSU-SAN'S STILL GOING THROUGH A ROUGH PERIOD
TH-THIRTIETH!?
AND NOW THAT NATSU-KUN PLACED 30TH IN THE NATIONAL MOCK EXAMS, ALL THE GIRLS ARE LOOKING AT HIM DIFFERENTLY
I GET IT.
BUT SEE...
ER, YEAH...
JUST AS A FRIEND ♡

huff
huff
ISN'T THAT ONE TODA'S OLDER SISTER?
YUP, THAT'S HER ALL RIGHT
TUG
WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT TO SAY THAT!?
OW!
LIKE NATSU WOULD EVER GO OUT WITH A ROTTEN BITCH LIKE YOU!
SHUT UP AND COME WITH ME
NATSU, THAT HURTS!
OW OW OW OW!
I'M SORRY.
OH...

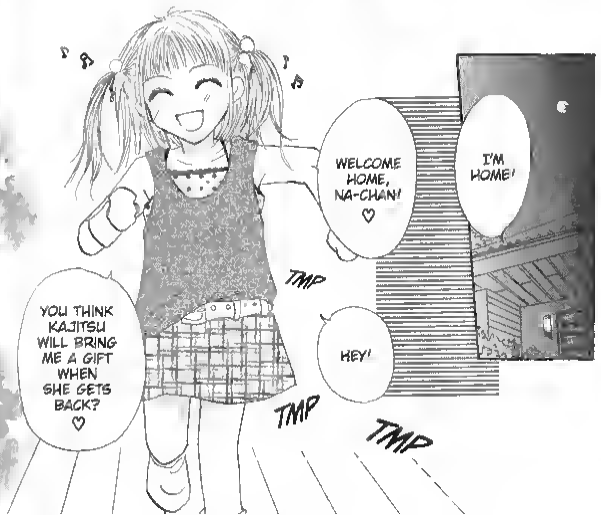
YOU THINK YOU GET SPECIAL TREATMENT JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE HIS BIG SISTER?
BUT IT'S OKAY IF I DO! DON'T LUMP ME IN WITH THEM!
YOU WERE ALSO MAKING A LOT OF NOISE, AS I RECALL
AND WHY NOT?
WHY? BECAUSE YOU'RE MY-
GASP
I MAY BE YOUR LITTLE BROTHER, BUT YOU DON'T OWN ME.
GIVE ME A BREAK
YOU REALLY
...LIKE TO...
...MONOPOLIZE ME, HUH?

RIGHT.
I DON'T MIND ♡
THANKS, MANO-CHAN.

...YOU'D NEVER TALK TO ME! AND THAT I WAS PLAIN
It's rude!
B-B-BUT IT WAS THEIR FAULT!! THEY SAID THAT IF I WASN'T YOUR OLDER SISTER...


BUT THEY WERE MAKING WAY TOO MUCH NOISE, WHINING ABOUT WANTING TO BE YOUR GIRLFRIEND!
What are you, a preschooler?
SO?

HEY, AKAI! WHERE'D YA' GO?
LISTEN TO ME WHEN I'M TALKING!
Hey!
YOU'RE THAT NEW HOME EC TEACHER!
BRK!
STARE
WOW, SHE CRIES LIKE A BABY!
OH, HE'S GONE
QUIT SPYING!
YUP, WATCHING THAT MADE ME SEE THE VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN YOUR FEELINGS.
RIGHT, AKAI?


WELCOME HOME, NA-CHAN! ♡
I'M HOME!
TMP
HEY!
TMP
TMP
YOU THINK KAJITSU WILL BRING ME A GIFT WHEN SHE GETS BACK? ♡

IT'S NOT MY FAULT!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S NOT BEING FAIR!
YOU GOT JEALOUS ONCE BEFORE, REMEMBER?
EXCL!!
HEY!
DASH
YOU WERE ANGRY BECAUSE I WENT OUT WITH ANOTHER GUY!
QUIT BEING UNFAIR!

...WHEN WE'LL JUST SEE EACH OTHER AT HOME?
HM?
There must be a reason why she said that.
WHAT'S THE POINT OF RUNNING AWAY...

PLEASE, MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME
THAT'S A LOT OF LUGGAGE
ER... WELCOME
JUST HOW MANY NIGHTS DOES SHE PLAN ON STAYING?
Yeah!
Watch this!
FLIP
FLIP
Dinner is served!
ALL RIGHTY THEN!
MOM!
WHAT SHALL I COOK UP NEXT?
I am a hard-worker!
Come on!
PHEW. JET BATHS ARE THE BEST!
I COULD GET USED TO LIVING HERE
LIVING HERE?
PUFF
PUFF
SHE'S SUCH A SURVIVOR
Tough as a wild animal
HA HA HA
SHE IS THE FIRST PERSON TO WIN OVER MY MOM LIKE THIS!
KAJITSU-CHAN, YOU CAN STAY HERE FOR AS LONG AS YOU WANT! WILL YOU BE MANO'S LITTLE SISTER?

I DECIDED TO TAKE YOU UP ON YOUR OFFER TO STAY AT YOUR PLACE!
I OWE YOU ONE!
HUFF
HUFF
SHOVE
I'm off on a trip! Don't look for me! Kajitsu
Look at that
Note
GIFT?
Of course she means she's running away from home! And no, Satsuki! She're won't be any bears.
I want a polar bear
BY "TRIP" I HOPE SHE MEANS THE SOUTH POLE IF SHE'S STAYING NEARBY, THEN SHE'S JUST RUNNING AWAY FROM HOME!
Which means Na-chan's in charge of dinner tonight!
HUFF
HUFF

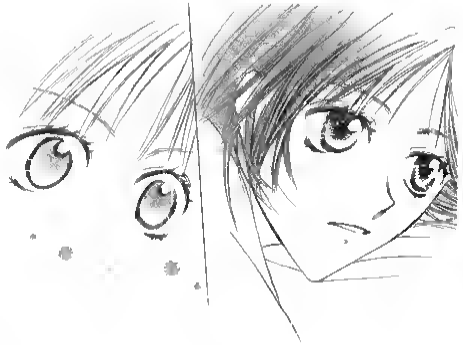
FORGET ABOUT NATSU
I LIKE HIM, BUT...
...IT'LL ALWAYS BE A ONE-SIDED LOVE.
I WOULDN'T SAY THAT EITHER!
HE'S MY LITTLE BROTHER
OF COURSE!
NATSU-KUN'S YOUR ONE TRUE LOVE ANYWAY, RIGHT?
FLOP
THEN I GUESS WE'RE PARTNERS IN UNREQUITED LOVE!
LET'S SLEEP HOLDING HANDS.

SORRY! IT WAS TOO EMBARRASSING!
AND HE SAID TO KEEP IT A SECRET
He'll tease me again if he gets angry...
WHEN DID THIS HAPPEN?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU DIDN'T TELL ME!
N-NO WAY! WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING!
I did sneak a little peck on his cheek though
GIDDY
GIDDY
SO? DID YOU KISS HIM?
OR MORE THAN THAT?
WHAT!?
YOU DID ALL THAT WITH AKAI-SENSEI!?
THAT'S NOT HOW IT IS WITH SENSEI AND ME
I REALLY RESPECT HIM
AND I KNOW HE'S JUST PLAYING AROUND WITH ME

HE PROBABLY THINKS HE CAN'T TELL YOU.
TOKIHITO-KUN DOESN'T EVEN SHOW UP IN YOUR NATSU-KUN SCOPE.
Guess you're right.
YOU SEE
...TOKIHITO-KUN'S ALWAYS WATCHING OVER YOU, HOPING YOU'LL FIND TRUE HAPPINESS WITH SOMEONE.
YOU'VE KNOWN THIS ALL ALONG, MANO-CHAN?
AND YOU'RE OKAY WITH IT?
THAT'S ONE OF THE THINGS I LOVE ABOUT HIM.
HE'S JUST A PASSING FLING.
Manno-chan, is that the type of person you really are?
Just pretend you don't see it when I do.
Some day, I might just walking and tackle him on the spot!
But, who knows?

HOW'S IT GOING WITH... WELL, YOU KNOW
WHAT HAPPENED WITH TOKIHITO-KUN AFTER YOU CONFESSED?
MANO-CHAN?
YES?
YOU, KAJITSU-CHAN
NOTHING AT ALL
HE'S ALREADY GOT A CRUSH ON SOMEONE ELSE
WHAT!?
HE DOES? WHO? I HAD NO IDEA!
Tee hee!
I'M SERIOUS THERE'S NO ONE WHO'S AROUND HIM AS MUCH AS YOU, RIGHT?
BUT TOKIHITO-KUN'S JUST A FRIEND
YOU'RE KIDDING RIGHT?

KAJITSU-CHAN?
OH MY GOD
WHAT AM I DOING?
HOW COULD I BE SO STUPID?
...MY HAPPINESS WAS THE ONLY THING I COULD SEE
I'VE BEEN HAVING SO MUCH FUN... EVERY DAY THAT
I COMPLETELY LOST SIGHT OF MY BEST FRIEND



"YOU SHOULD GO OUT WITH HER!"

WHAT'S THE MATTER?
JERK

HAVE YOU EVER WISHED FOR SOMEON'E HAPPINESS.
..OUTSIDE OF YOUR OWN?
HEY
SEN-SEI?
Because he was peeking with T'mo
HUH?
HOW DID YOU KNOW, SENSEI?
SCARY!
GRUN
I RAN AWAY FROM HOME
I'M STAYING WITH A FRIEND FOR NOW IT'S KINDA FUN!
SHE SEEMS DOWN.
Booonng
I DON'T THINK I CAN DO EVERYTHING ON MY OWN, BUT...
I DON'T WANT TO BECOME THE TYPE OF PERSON WHO CAN'T DO ANYTHING BY HERSELF
PRETTY PATHETIC, HUH?
I'M STARTING TO GIVE UP, THINKING I'M HELPLESS
BUT NOW

IT'S LIKE A POWERFUL BLINDFOLD
...THAT CAN MAKE YOU LOSE SIGHT OF EVERYTHING
TODA-SAN.
I HEARD YOU HAD A FIGHT WITH YOUR BROTHER
HAPPINESS CAN BE SCARY.

SENSEI!
YOU JUST GOT HIRED! YOU WANNA GET FIRED RIGHT OFF THE BAT?
HA HA HA
"HELP ME"
There are so many people! (Trapped)
IT'S WRITTEN ON YOUR FACE...
...TODA-SAN.
PUSH...
I CAN DEAL WITH THIS ON MY OWN!
SEE, THAT'S WHAT I MEAN.
I'LL NEVER GROW UP IF I KEEP GETTING HELP FROM EVERYONE!

Hey!
SORRY I JUST BLABBED THAT ALL TO YOU!
BUT YOU'RE SUCH A GOOD LISTENER!
HA HA HA!
PAT

WOULD YOU BE UPSET IF I KISSED YOU RIGHT NOW?
YEAH, YOU PROBABLY WOULD
FORGET I SAID THAT

#15

Your Blue (Part Two)

IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE I START...
...AS LONG AS I START CHANGING SOMETHING
EVEN IF IT GOES WRONG, I'M SURE I'LL RECOVER
TOKIHITO-KUN...

crossroad Chapter 15: Your Blue (Part Two)

Author's Story

When I redecorated my workplace, I also decided to buy myself a new bike. My last one was pretty run-down, and only slightly faster than walking. I couldn't stand it any longer, so I exchanged it for a glittering orange baby! Not only is my new baby fast, but comfortable! I can just zip along on it. Gaze upon my beautiful bike! Isn't its orange body just brilliant? I want to show it off to the world, so I use it all over town. The other day, though, when I put it in the bike lot at my apartment, there was a sparkly orange bike sitting right next to it. I smiled sadly to myself.

IT WAS BACK WHEN I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME.

YOU WERE STARING AT THE BLUE SKY.

1-3
The Blue Sky
Tankoubon Shoutarou

OH!
OH!
YEAH?
FELIDAL LORD?
BUT IT'S NOT BECAUSE SHE'S BEING BULLIED
SHE'S ALWAYS ALONE

..IS MY SECRET ALONE
YOUR BLUE SKY...
MANO-CHAN
JUST AS A FRIEND
AND I GOT TALLER LIKE SHE SAID I WOULD
SHE'S MADE A LOT OF PROGRESS
IF I COMPARE HER TO HOW SHE WAS BACK THEN...
HM?
LOOK
LOOK
LOOK
Yup!
WHOA
NOW I'M JUST ACTING CREEPY!
HMM?
WHEN I LOOK UP AT THE BLUE BLUE SKY I FEEL AS THOUGH MY HEART IS CALLING OUT TO ME
THE WIND, LIGHT THAT TRAVELS OVER THE CLOUDS AN NEVER RETURNS WAVE
Heh

Hey there!
TOKIHITO-KUN!
I'M A BAD MAN!
WHAT DID YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
SPLASH
SPLOOSH
Cleansing his soul
SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOU IN THE MIDDLE OF PRACTICE
MANO-CHAN!
TMP
TMP
TMP
DING DONG
DING DONG
YOU COULD'VE DROPPED IT OFF ANY TIME
YOU CAME ALL THE WAY JUST FOR THIS?
I JUST WANTED TO RETURN THE TOWEL YOU LENT ME
OH NO! I'M GETTING ALL MUSHY INSIDE!

UNDOUBTEDLY GOOD.
AH, SHE REALLY IS A GOOD KID
FLUTTER
RUB
RUB
OH, BUT I'M SO LONELY
THAT'S HOW IT HAS TO BE
ROOF
MANO-CHAN
NO DOUBT SHE'LL FORGET ABOUT ME AND FIND A HOT BOYFRIEND
SHE'S THE SWEETEST GIRL I KNOW
I CAN'T START THINKING ABOUT A DIFFERENT GIRL WHEN I'M ALREADY THINKING ABOUT THE GIRL I LIKE!
WHAT AM I DOING!?
I'm acting like Judy Ongg!
See the translator's note in the back of the book.
PUF
AN IMAGINARY MANO BALLOON!
IT'S HUGE!
ROOF
SLAP
WH-WHAT THE HECK?
I'M AN UNFAITHFUL MAN!
IT'S UNFAITHFUL OF ME!
LATELY, WHENEVER I START THINKING ABOUT KAJITSU-SAN, AN IMAGE OF MANO-CHAN SUDDENLY SLIPS INTO MY MIND.
SLIDE
SLIDE

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'S GETTING DRAGGED ALONG
MANO-CHAN DOESN'T FEEL ANYTHING FOR ME ANYMORE.
SIGH...
HA HA HA...
GIRLS ARE SO STRONG...
I'm going home
TROT TROT TROT
NO! I'M SERIOUS!
HE'S JUST A FRIEND!
"HE'S JUST A FRIEND!"
SOMEHOW I DON'T BELIEVE IT.
SO TOKIHITO-KUN LIKES ME?
STARE...
THIS IS MY CHANCE
TOKIHITO-KUN'S ALONE

OH!
KAJITSU-CHAN'S RUN AWAY FROM HOME!
DID I JUST SOUND LIKE I MISSED HER?
BLUSH
...I DIDN'T GET TO SEE YOU ALL DAY
YEAH, BUT TODAY...
I'M BACK!
THAT YOUR BOY-FRIEND?
You can see him anytime.
NO!
LATER!
RUN AWAY FROM HOME?
YUP!
TELL THAT TO NATSU-KUN, OKAY?
BUT SHE'S JUST FINE, SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.

Happy Things...

I've been getting a lot of letters these days saying, "I'm so glad Kajitsu's gotten cuter!"

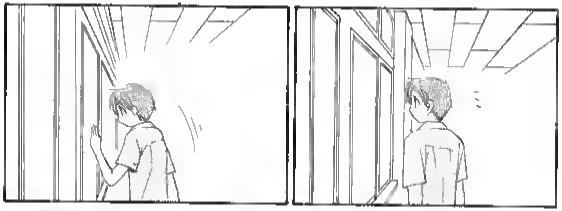
Kajitsu still has a lot more changing to do, so I'm looking forward to it.

Screams

Thank you so much for the letters!
I love the gifts, too!
Oh, and please don't worry about being polite to me. It's okay!
My replies might be slow—but I do write them!
Thank you all so very, very much!
Yeeaah!

To send fan mail to Mizuki-san, mail it to:
5757 Kanan Rd. #581
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

AND I ALREADY HAVE SO FEW OR SHOULD I SAY NONE?
DOOM
I'M THE WORST!
I'M GOING TO LOSE A FRIEND! I KNOW IT!
"I CAN BE SO DENSE I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW YOU FELT!"
"SORRY FOR SAYING THAT WEIRD THING THE OTHER DAY!"
STILL, I'VE BEEN PRACTICING WHAT I SHOULD SAY



...THEN WHY DON'T YOU LET US HAVE OUR OWN CELL PHONES?
B-B-B-BUT... B-
He's pissed about something
I'M TIRED OF LISTENING TO YOU!
SHUT UP!
WHAT'S HER REASON FOR LEAVING IN THE FIRST PLACE? HUH, NATSU?
BURI DAIKON *
That's it.
WHAT'S FOR DINNER TONIGHT, NA-CHAN?
Slump
There, there.
There's something scary about him today.
WE KNOW WHERE SHE'S STAYING, AND SHE'S STILL GOING TO SCHOOL IF YOU'RE REALLY THAT WORRIED...
THIS SMELLS LIKE A CRIME!
OH, NO!
OH, NO!
OH, NO!

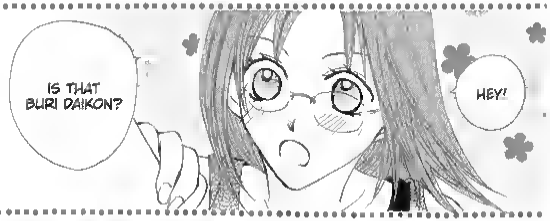
*Simmered daikon with a yellowtail collar.

WHAT!? WHAT DO YOU MEAN KAJITSU HASN'T COME HOME YET!
HMPH
IT'S SO HARD TO SEE.
MANO-CHAN...
MY OWN FEELINGS
TOKIHITO-KUN WAS WATCHING MANO-CHAN.

OH

WAAAH
TRY PUTTING SALT ON THE GRASS AND EATING THAT!
SORRY YOU'RE NOT SATISFIED!
sniffle
Is it really that bad?
sniffle
MAKOTO
WHEN'S ONEE-CHAN COMING HOME?

OH!


IS THAT BURI DAIKON?
HEY!

YOU CAN REALLY MAKE THIS?
IT'S NATSU'S FAVORITE DISH
It tastes like Mom's cooking
KAJITSU-CHAN, YOU'RE AMAZING!
I WAS RAISED BY MY GRAND-MOTHER AFTER ALL

FREEZE...
It stinks of fish. You sure you put in enough salt?
THIS.
IS DISGUSTING
At the Tada Household

KAJITSU-SAN!
OH!
DO WHATEVER YOU WANT!
JEEZ THAT HURT!
HUFF!
OW!
OH! IS THAT SO!?
NOT CUTE AT ALL!
KICK
THIS MUST BE SETTLED!
OR ELSE YOU'LL BE AT A STAND-STILL FOREVER!
AT TIMES LIKE THIS, SOMEONE HAS TO GIVE A LITTLE!
Psychic Speech
I'VE BEEN WONDERING FOR A WHILE NOW
YOU TWO SHOULD JUST TALK OUT YOUR DIFFERENCES!
come on
NORMALLY A GUY WITH YOUR FEELINGS WOULD COME BETWEEN US
...SET ON KAJITSU AND ME GETTING ALONG?
...WHY YOU'RE SO...

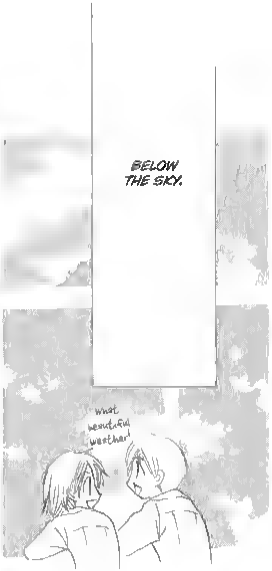
HUH?
TOKIHI-TO-KUN?
PAT
HAA...
NOOGIE
NOOGIE
YOU'RE MY FRIEND RIGHT?
HOW WAS DINNER, NATSU?
HOW'S ...IT GOING...
NO ONE TO DO THE CLEANING OR THE LAUNDRY THE TODA HOUSE MUST BE A MESS BY NOW!
MOM'S TERRIBLE AT COOKING -- AND THERE'S NO ONE ELSE WHO CAN DO IT
YOU GUYS EATING WELL AT HOME?
GRR
EVERYTHING'S JUST PEACHY
I DO THE COOKING, TARO DOES THE LAUNDRY AND SATSUKI CAN MANAGE THE CLEANING
Buff
NOT REALLY.

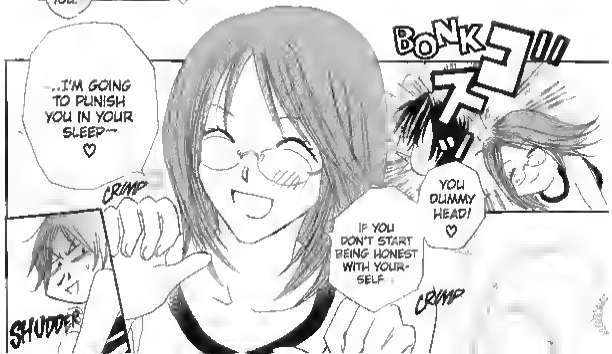
MY FEELINGS FOR KAJITSU-SAN HAVE ALREADY BEEN RETURNED.
I'M FINE
WHY DIDN'T I REALIZE IT EARLIER?
THAT DAY
WE BOTH THINK OF EACH OTHER...
AS A GOOD FRIEND
YOU WERE GAZING AT THE BLUE BLUE SKY
I'LL BE JUST FINE
I'M GAZING AT IT, TOO, THE SAME AS YOU

I LIKE YOU TOO
BUT I KNOW THAT KAJITSU-SAN LOVES YOU, NATSU-KUN.
SO I GUESS I WANT TO CHEER YOU TWO ON.
HUH? WHY DO I GET THE FEELING I'VE HEARD THIS ALL BEFORE?
YOU TWO BEING HAPPY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING TO ME
YES, I'M RIGHT
RIGHT
HUH?
I LIKE BOTH OF YOU!
OH.
SO THAT'S WHAT SHE MEANT
I'D BE THRILLED TO SEE BOTH OF YOU HAPPY!

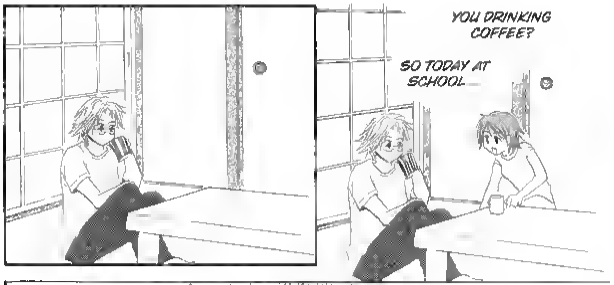
I AM HONEST.
Natsu-kun's Cell phone
090-XXX-XX
HEE HEE HEE HEE ♡
I'M GOING TO WATCH SOME TV. SO YOU JUST TAKE YOUR TIME
JUST KIDDING! ♡
MANO-CHAN REALLY CREEPS ME OUT.
I SWEAR, SOME-TIMES.
SHE TELLS ME TO START BEING HONEST, BUT
. .THE MORE OF A PAIN I BECOME FOR NATSU.
BUT THE MORE HONEST I AM
Tonight's dinner was another flop. I ought to take more lessons.
All I can make is simple meals.
SIGH...
GLUB GLUB GLUB
NATSU... ♡
OR DOES HE.
IS IT BECAUSE NATSU'S SO POLITE THAT HE CAN'T SAY IT?

HERE!
WH-WHY WOULD I DO THAT?
HOW ABOUT YOU GIVE NATSU-KUN A RING?
I'M SURE YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT THE HOUSE AND ALL
HO HO HO
I'M GOING TO STAY HERE AS YOUR LITTLE SISTER!
NOT AT ALL!
OH YOU.


BELOW THE SKY.
What wonderful weather!


...I'M GOING TO PUNISH YOU IN YOUR SLEEP~ ♡
BONK
YOU DUMMY HEAD! ♡
CRUMP
IF YOU DON'T START BEING HONEST WITH YOUR-SELF...
CRUMP
SHUDDER

.....
WHAT AM I THINKING?
SHE'S NOT A KID
MAYBE I'LL TAKE A BATH AND HIT THE HAY
GOOD NIGHT.
KAJITSU-CHAN, I'M GOING TO SLEEP NOW
OKAY
SHE'S STILL STARING AT IT
IT'S NOT THAT I WANT TO MONOPOLIZE NATSU
I WANT HIM TO MONOPOLIZE ME.
I WANT TO BELONG TO NATSU
...WAS HAPPY WHEN I SAW THAT HE WAS JEALOUS.
I...

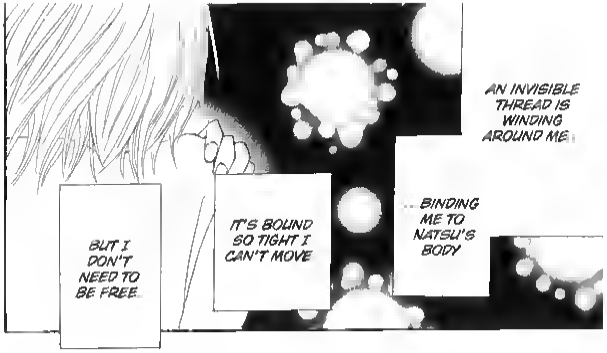

YOU DRINKING COFFEE?
SO TODAY AT SCHOOL...

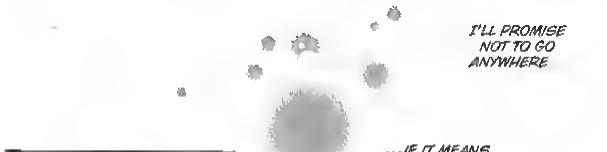
.....

Nitta Mano
090-XXX-XX
.....

BECAUSE HE'S MY KIND .
BECAUSE NATSU'S SO KIND
IT'S FUTILE OF ME TO TRY
YOU WANT ME TO COME PICK YOU UP?
...LITTLE BROTHER.

Thank you so much for letting me in!
Right right Alright
mumble mumble
NATSU...
...I'M SORRY
I WAS BEING SELF-ISH
I WAS HAPPY JUST BEING ABLE TO SEE YOU AGAIN...
...BUT THEN I WENT ASKING FOR MORE


AN INVISIBLE THREAD IS WINDING AROUND ME.
...BINDING ME TO NATSU'S BODY
IT'S BOUND SO TIGHT I CAN'T MOVE
BUT I DON'T NEED TO BE FREE.


I'LL PROMISE NOT TO GO ANYWHERE
...IF IT MEANS BEING HIS

HELLO?
NN...
CREAK
KAJITSU?
ROLL

I LIKE YOU TOO..
BUT
I'M NOT SURE...IF IT'S AS A SISTER OR AS A WOMAN
THE MORE I FEEL LIKE IMPULSIVELY REACHING OUT AND TOUCHING YOU
THE MORE YOU SAY YOU LIKE ME...AND I'M A GUY, SO..
..IT'S NO SURPRISE THAT.
LEAN
LIKE, FOR EXAMPLE...
AH, JEEZ.
?
EXCUSE ME FOR A MINUTE

For a home to wait? Who-?
BEHAVIOR LIKE THAT CAN MAKE EVERYONE NEUROTIC!
HA HA HA HA
I DON'T THINK IT'S GOOD FOR A HOME TO WAIT FOR A SISTER WHO'S AS HUNGRY FOR AFFECTION AS A WOLF IS FOR BLOOD
IT'S EASIER THAN GETTING DRAGGED ALONG
I'M GOOD AT THROWING THEM AWAY IN ORDER TO KEEP ON LIVING
MY FEELINGS AND HOPES.
DON'T WORRY I'LL FORGET THEM SOON.
THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO THINK YOU'RE IMPORTANT.
QUIT TALKING LIKE THAT.
SORRY
QUIT BEING SO INDIFFERENT TO YOURSELF

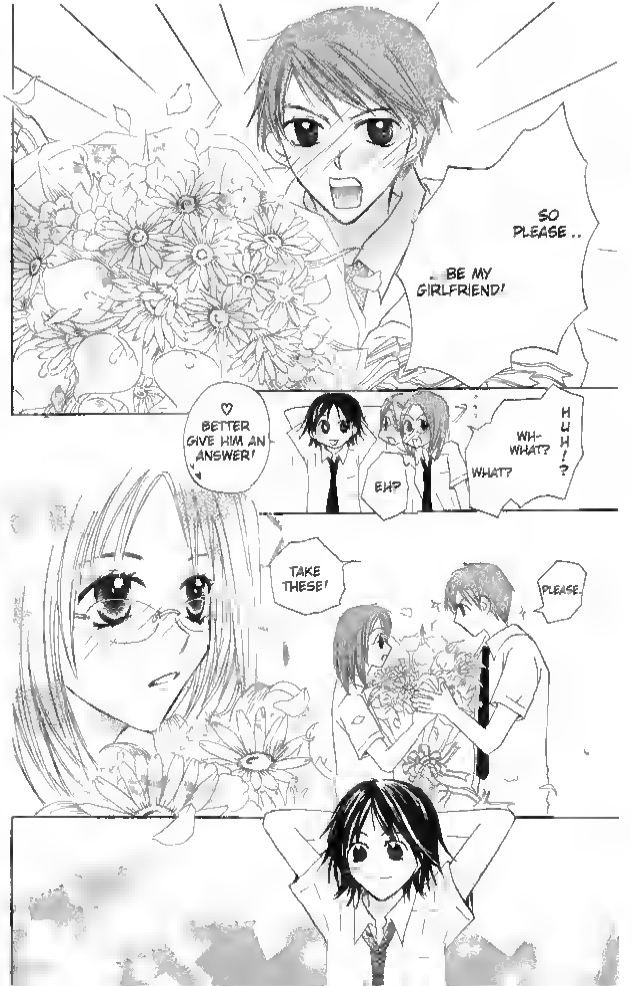
...THAT HE DOESN'T NEED ME, OR THAT I'LL THROW MY HEART AWAY JUST TO SURVIVE.
I'M SORRY.
...HOW MUCH I FEEL LIKE GIVING UP...
I NEED TIME TO THINK EVERYTHING OVER.
TO THINK ABOUT YOU, AND OUR FAMILY
NO MATTER...
...I'LL NEVER AGAIN SAY...
I WANT YOU TO ALWAYS BE PRECIOUS TO ME
I NEED TO MAKE SURE...
...THAT WE DON'T LOSE EACH OTHER BECAUSE OF CONFUSED FEELINGS

TH-THAT WAS CERTAINLY A SURPRISE.
...BUT I WON'T.
IT WOULD BE REALLY EASY FOR ME TO GIVE IN WHEN I FEEL LIKE THIS.
FOR NOW, LET'S KEEP TRYING TO BE SIBLINGS
WE CAN DO IT EVEN IF WE HAVE TO SUPPRESS OUR FEELINGS
IT'S SO EASY.
PEOPLE LIKE US ARE BORN WITH THIS ABILITY

EXCUSE ME...
THOSE FLOWERS.
I'LL PAY FOR SOME-NO, ALL OF THEM!
Bouquet 5,000 yen!
*$50!
Where!?
FLOWERS
OH! YOUNG MASTER! GOOD MORNING!
STARE
...AND YOU MIGHT LALIGH IN MY FACE
IT MIGHT BE TOO LATE
MANO-CHAN
MANO-CHAN--I MEAN, NITTA-SAN!
I LOVE YOU!
...BUT I...
2-3
CHATTER

I'M SORRY.
BECAUSE I LOVE YOU...
...KAJITSU.

YES
I WOULD LOVE TO.
I did it!
Ooooh!
CHEER
CHEER
MANO-CHAN'S TEARS, HIDDEN BY THE FLOWER PETALS, WERE SO BEAUTIFUL..


SO PLEASE..
..BE MY GIRLFRIEND!
♡ BETTER GIVE HIM AN ANSWER!
EH?
WHAT?
WH-WHAT?
HUH!?
TAKE THESE!
PLEASE.

THOUGH I'M NOT SURE HOW MANY LAST NAMES WILL GO ON THE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE
AND SO I CAN SOMEDAY BECOME HIS BRIDE~~! AAH, I WANT THAT SO BADLY!
SO I CAN GET NATSU TO APPROACH ME!
I GOTTA UP MY FEMININITY..

GYAAAAAH!
SNAP
TODA-SAN YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE WEARING A BRA THAT'S EASY TO TAKE OFF
OH
YOU'RE RIGHT!

!!
CLATTER
KAJITSU, YOU HERE?
OH!
I heard you had a club meeting.
WHAT ABOUT YOU AKAI?
YEAH IT COMES OFF EASY. I BET I COULD DO IT WITH ONE HAND!
I CAN WEAR WHATEVER BRA I FEEL LIKE!
I'M GOING TO BE HOME A BIT LATE TODA

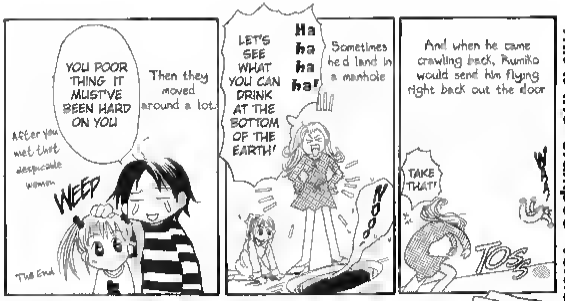
GLITTERING BRIGHTER THAN THE BLUE SKY.

CLEAR AND SHINING

YES!
IT'S MY TURN TO TRY MY BEST!
NOW THAT MANO-CHAN AND TOKIHITO-KUN'S SITUATION HAS WORKED OUT SO WELL...
Hum
LA LA LA LA LA!
CALLIGRAPHY
Hum
Slowing away as usual

Crossroad bonus manga
Satsuki-chan's Record of Struggles
Satsuki-chan, the youngest in the Tada household...
...is going to work her hardest today!
Onee-chan
Taro-nii
Na-chan
WHERE DID YOU GET ALL THOSE CLOTHES?
She makes sure to keep relationships with the neighbors strong!
THESE ARE HAND ME-DOWNS FROM MY GRAND-CHILD BUT I THOUGHT THEY WOULD LOOK PERFECT ON YOU, SATSUKI-CHAN!
TRY THIS ON! TRY THIS ON! ♡
I just love children
#1
Satsuki's job is to watch the house.
HELLO! IS SATSUKI-CHAN HOME? ♡
Because her father was a violent drunkard...
Yeaaaah
Bring me more sake!
I WANT A DIVORCE, YOU BUCKET OF SLIME!
THUD
...when Rumiko kicked out the door!
#2
Poor Satsuki doesn't know where she came from
Why, you ask?
And by selling their gifts at a flea market...
The End
...she brings in quite a lot for the household budget
Welcome! Welcome!
Children Climbing Ad Display
¥1,000
YOU SEE, NUMBER ONE IS...
RIGHT, RIGHT! THIS IS NONE OF HIS BUSINESS!
I bet we could tease both of them
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK! HE'S THE ONE WHO-
NA...NATSU!
...OUR LITTLE TOY
A PERSONAL SLAVE, YOU COULD SAY
...OF OUR LOWER REGIONS
!!
MY PURE LOVE!
...HAS A DIFFICULT JOURNEY AHEAD.
Now I'm angry!
WOULD YOU PLEASE STOP WITH THE SICK JOKES, YOU TWISTED TEACHERS!
CRASH
BONK
GYAA!
HUFF
Ho ho ho!
How very suspicious...
Not to mention her thoughts!

"This is the "cramped" version of Satsuki-chan's activities.


YOU POOR THING IT MUST'VE BEEN HARD ON YOU
Then they moved around a lot.
After you met that despicable woman
WEEP
The End
LET'S SEE WHAT YOU CAN DRINK AT THE BOTTOM OF THE EARTH!
Ha ha ha ha!
Sometimes he'd land in a manhole
And when he came crawling back, Kumiko would send him flying right back out the door
TAKE THAT!!
TOSS

And secretly, Satsuki keeps doing her best
And once again, peace is brought to the Toda household
UPPEE!
...she brightens up the mood in no time!
Satsuki-chan's Recore of Struggles / End

crossroad Chapter 16: A Morning in the Toda Household

YOU'RE 29, FOR GOD'S SAKE!
YOU KNOW YOU HAVE TO GO TO WORK EARLY, SO QUIT GOING OUT TO DRINK SO LATE!
Eldest daughter, Kajitsu Toda (16) 2nd year in high school. Gopher for the Calligraphy Club
I END UP OVER-DRINKING
WHEN SOMEONE OFFERS ME A FREE DRINK, I CAN'T QUIT
I'M SURPRISED THAT SOMEONE WITH SO LITTLE LIFE EXPERIENCE WOULD CRITICIZE SOMEONE MORE MATURE THAN THEM.
Mother Rumiko (2%) Spanish teacher at Foreign Languages School

Feelings of Nostalgia 5

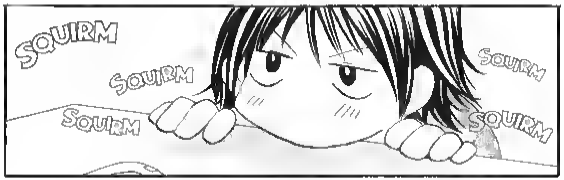
Satsuki is in grade school, but she doesn't wear a Knapsack. That's because I already detested knapsacks by second grade. I thought they were sooo childish. The school-regulated jersey was also considered lame* so I didn't wear it and would get yelled at by the teachers...and that is how I grew up into an adult. (laugh) I'd like to draw Satsuki's grade school life, too. Someday. I'll write it. I really have too many, "Oh, I'll write that someday" stories. Like Crossroad...

KAJITSU, COULD YOU BE A SWEETY AND GET ME A CUP OF WATER?
UGH, WHAT A HANGOVER.
LATELY, THE TODA HOUSEHOLD HAS BEEN PEACEFUL.
WATER?
WHAT A SPITEFUL BRAT!
HERE
GOOD TIMING. I WAS ABOUT TO CHANGE IT

OUR FAMILY TREE IS UTTERLY BEWILDERING!
IT'LL DESTROY OUR FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM!
WE HAVE TO QUIT PLAYING GAMES ABOUT WHO'S RELATED TO WHO!
HEY! QUIT AVOIDING THE QUESTION!
THIS CLAM SOUP SURE IS GOOD ♡
SIGH
SLAM
USE THIS!
CLONCK
HUH?
YO!
KAJITSU!
KAAAY
JUST IN CASE YOU RUN AWAY AGAIN
IT'S YOUR OWN CELL PHONE
First Son Toro (21)
Truck Driver
Self-proclaimed
Man of the House
EW! YOU STINK OF SAKE!
YOU'RE LOOKING CUTE TODAY! ♡
GOOD MORNING, MY LITTLE SATSUKI! ♡
HUG
Second daughter
Satsuki (7)
2nd grade
Popular
MAMA
SATSUKI, GET DRESSED AND BRUSH YOUR TEETH
OOKAY
Oh my
OOPS, SORRY, SORRY
ONEE-CHAN
... GOOD MORNING
MOM!
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK FOR A WHILE, BUT...
HM?
SLEEP
SLEEP
...!!!
...IS SATSUKI ...YOUR REAL DAUGHTER?

THAT'S OKAY, I WON'T BE MESSAGING YOU ANYWAY
NOW HOW ABOUT I GIVE YOU MY MAIL ADDRESS-
I WAS THE ONLY ONE IN MY CLASS WHO DIDN'T HAVE A CELL PHONE! WOO-HOO! ♡
WHY YOU SNEAKY--
OOOH, ONII-CHAN—I WANT A DVD! ♡
NUDGE
NUDGE
SQUEALY
TIME TO CALL UP MANO-CHAN! ♡
YEAH, TOTALLY!

YOU BOUGHT IT FOR ME, ONII-CHAN?
ONLY USE IT WHEN YOU NEED TO! I'LL THROW IT OUT THE WINDOW IF YOU EVEN THINK ABOUT SIGNING UP FOR ONE OF THOSE DUMB CHAT ROOM PLANS!"
HUMPH
*See translator's note in the back of the book.
OH, THANK YOU, ONII-CHAN! THANK YOU!
YOU'RE THE BEST! I LOVE YOU!
KNO-
KNOCK IT OFF, YOU IDIOT!
SMACK
HE SURE IS STARVING FOR LOVE.
PLEASE, I'M A BLOODY FOOL!
BLUSH
IT'S MY DUTY AS THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE-HOLD!
I love you, onii-chan!
You're the best!
Thank you, onii-chan!


SQUIRM
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
SQUIRM

MY VERY FIRST MAIL! ♡
SQUEAL
WOO-HOO! IT CAME!
cell phone
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
SQUIRM
SQUEAL
THAT WAS FAST!
RING RING
So?

SAT-SUKI...
...ARE YOU SURE YOU CAN HOLD ALL THAT?

HA HA HA!
THIS IS MY FIRST DAY
OH WELL.
Just two letters?

ALL RIGHTY!
THAT'S GREAT!
AND I CAN EVEN SEND MAIL! ♡
MY BIG BROTHER JUST BOUGHT IT FOR ME! ♡
Heh heh!

SMILE
American Hot Dog Fried
24h
BUZZ
BUZZ
BUZZ
HM?
X2
Second Son, Natsu (16)
2nd year in high school, Valedictorian
Goal: Tokyo University

Yoohoo! Natsu~!
Oni-chan just got me a cell phone! Woo-hoo! Yippee!
Kajitsu
BEEP BEEP BEEP
I'VE GOT MAIL
WHO IS THIS?

I DUNNO
HOW ABOUT YOU, ONEE-CHAN?
I THINK MY MAMA ALREADY PASSED AWAY
AND NATSU'S MAMA DID, TOO
BUT IF THEY'RE STILL ALIVE SOME-WHERE OUT THERE...
I'M SURE THEY'RE WORRIED ABOUT US
AND WONDER-ING IF WE'RE DOING OKAY
OR WHAT WE RE DOING
OH
HOW ABOUT TARO-N!! S MAMA?

OF COURSE! WHO COULD PASS UP THE SPECIAL SALE OF ONE PACK PER PERSON?
THEY CAN'T LET DOWN A PAYING CONSUMER!
I've got 4 siblings at home to look after. Life is hard! Give me a discount, would ya?
You can say that, but...
YUP! I'LL BE OKAY! I'M STRONG!
I'M GLAD WE BOUGHT A LOT!
I'M SURE YOU MEAN SOME-ONE ELSE ♡
ONEE-CHAN YOU LOOK LIKE RUMIKO-MAMA!
HO HO HO...
LIKE?
OH..
SATSUKI, WHAT WAS YOUR REAL MOTHER...

I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF HIM AS A BIG BROTHER SINCE WE WERE KIDS
Hey!
Hmm...
...SOMEONE'S CHILD HE MUST HAVE PARENTS.

...BUT LATELY..
...I'VE FELT LIKE OUR HOME IS DOING PRETTY WELL
JUST KEEP BEING STRONG, SATSUKI
WOW. OUR FAMILY REALLY IS UNCLEAR
OKAY
EVERYONE'S HAD THEIR SHARE OF TROUBLES..
DART-THROWING
MONTH DAY (DAY DUTY)
2 PEOPLE IN A TEAM
JUST ONE TRY NO TRADING

OH..

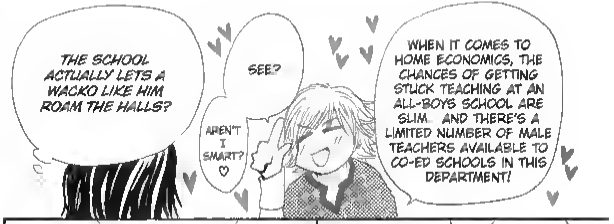
DON'T CRY OVER YOUR PARENTS!
I BET HE'D GET ANGRY IF I STARTED ASKING TOO MANY QUESTIONS
THAT'S FUNNY
ONII-CHAN'S?
I NEVER THOUGHT TO ASK HIM
"EVEN IF OUR PARENTS ARE GONE, YOU'VE STILL GOT A BIG BROTHER!"
"DON'T WORRY ABOUT A THING!"
ABOUT HIS REAL FAMILY

THAT'S RIGHT. ONII-CHAN WAS ALSO...
AS YOUR BIG BROTHER, I SWEAR I'LL PROTECT YOU!

HA HA HA...
NOW THEN, LET'S GO OUT AND DO SOME SHOPPING!
SENSEI, WOULD YOU PLEASE CALL ME BY MY NAME?
OH, NUMBER ONE-CHAN! IT'S YOU! AND THE GLASSES GIRL...
I'M NITTA
HELLO
I'M TODA, AND I'LL BE ASSISTING IN HOME EC THIS MONTH
Grap
IT'S A PLEASURE WORKING WITH YOU...
I WANTED A JOB THAT WOULD GIVE ME ACCESS TO LOTS OF HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS.
OOH?
IT'S AN ODD ROLE FOR YOU
WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO BE A HOME EC TEACHER TOMA-SENSEI?
UH..
HMM, THIS IS FOR 18 PEOPLE, SO..
CLANK
CLATTER
GO, KAJITSU-CHAN! YOU CAN DO IT!
KA-
ME
HA
ME
COME ON, DART GOD! GET ME SOMETHING EASY!
NEXT
OH NO..
HA!*
THUNK
WOOSH!
*Dragonball Z fans think here!
WELCOME TO HOME EC!
HELLO EVERYONE!

WE MADE FRUITCAKE IN CLASS TODAY WOULD YOU LIKE SOME?
I'M WRITING CALLIGRAPHY, AS YOU CAN PLAINLY SEE
WHAT IS IT?
STARE
WHAT ARE YOU DOING BY YOURSELF, SENSEI?
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
Damn it I'm losing my concentration
.....

JUST PUT IT OVER THERE
FINE.
I TURNED EVERY SINGLE ONE OF THEM AWAY
STILL AS POPULAR AS EVER, HUH, SENSEI?
Already filled to the brim
WHOA!
OVER THERE?
And they're wrapped!


THE SCHOOL ACTUALLY LETS A WACKO LIKE HIM ROAM THE HALLS?
SEE?
AREN'T I SMART? ♡
WHEN IT COMES TO HOME ECONOMICS, THE CHANCES OF GETTING STUCK TEACHING AT AN ALL-BOYS SCHOOL ARE SLIM. AND THERE'S A LIMITED NUMBER OF MALE TEACHERS AVAILABLE TO CO-ED SCHOOLS IN THIS DEPARTMENT!

HE'LL END UP GOING HE'S TOO PASSIONATE ABOUT CALLIGRAPHY NOT TO
IS THAT WHAT YOU THINK? WAIT AND SEE
I GUESS AKAI-SENSEI'S NOT GOING TO STUDY ABROAD ANYMORE?
BESIDES, I GOT CONNECTIONS IN THIS SCHOOL THANKS TO AKAI'S OLD MAN
I SEE
HAVING TO STUDY ABROAD WAS THE REASON HE BROKE UP WITH HIS LAST GIRLFRIEND.

THEN I GUESS...
...HE REALLY WILL LEAVE SOMEDAY

Here! Eat up!
BECAUSE MY LOVE FOR NATSU IS HUGE, TOO!
ANYWAY.
BEFORE I CAME HERE I GAVE A HUUUGE ONE TO NATSU!
Yeah...that's huge!
THERE WERE OTHER REASONS
THAT WASN'T ALL
OH...
NOW I WISH I'D GIVEN IT TO YOU.
BUT THE TRUTH IS
STRANGE, ISN'T IT?
IT MAKES ME LIKE YOU SO MUCH MORE
WHEN I SEE YOU WORKING ON YOUR CALLIGRAPHY...
...FOR SOME INEXPLICABLE REASON...
I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT I AM TO YOU...
BUT YOU'RE STRANGE, SENSEI.

I THINK I'D BETTER GO...
OOPS, LOOKS LIKE I'M INTERRUPTING YOUR WORK
I'LL MAKE US SOME COFFEE.
STAY
HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?
IS IT TRUE THAT YOU BROKE UP WITH YOUR GIRLFRIEND BECAUSE YOU WERE GOING ABROAD-YOWCH!
UH, SENSEI?
WHAT?
SLAM
Tomo, huh?
OH!
IN THAT CASE...

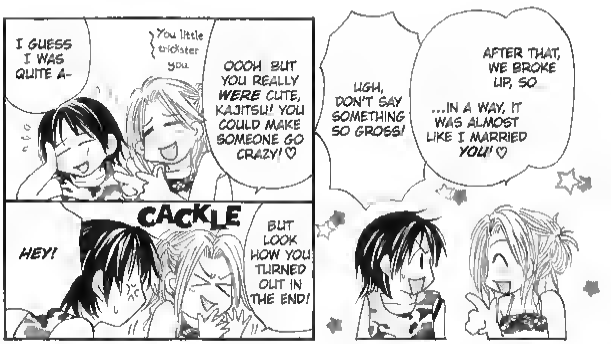
I LOVE IT...
...WHEN SENSEI IS KIND TO ME.
THAT'S WHY I REALLY WOULD BE SAD IF HE HAD TO GO
...HE'S GOING TO JUST -- POOF! -- DISAPPEAR ONE DAY.
IT'S ALMOST LIKE
Hmm...
ALBUM
MY LOVER?
SO SENSEI...
HA!
HEH. THAT WAS PRETTY GOOD
DOES THAT MAKE YOU NUMBER TWO?
IF I'M NUMBER ONE!

HEY WHATCHA' UP TO?
WOW, LOOK AT ALL THESE MEMORIES YOU'RE OPENING UP
I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW FEW PHOTOS THERE ARE OF OUR FATHERS
WELL, THAT'S BECAUSE..
MAMA, YOU SOUND LIKE A QUEEN!
FUKAI?
You two have been watching too much Nausicaa
...I BURNED THEM TO ASHES ALONG WITH THE FUKAI!*
THOSE HORRIBLE MEN!

*See translator's note in the back of the book.

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO FIRST CALLED ME THAT.
WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?
IF YOU'RE SUCH AN IRRESPONSIBLE PERSON, WHY ON EARTH DID YOU EVER WANT TO BE A MOTHER?
BUT MOM...

ARENT THERE ANY PICTURES OF YOUR FAMILY?
OH-HO PHOTOS OF WHEN I WAS SMALL!
THIS SURE BRINGS BACK MEMORIES
TARO'S PASSBOOK?
WHAT'S IT DOING HERE?
FLAP
WHAT IS THIS?
ROTATING?
Woohoo! Yeah! Ha ha! Rotate! Rotate!
SPIN
SPIN
—I KEPT ROTATING FROM ONE RELATIVE'S HOUSE TO ANOTHER
I NEVER HAD A FAMILY
I BECAME INDEPENDENT WHEN I WAS FIFTEEN BEFORE THAT—


I GUESS I WAS QUITE A-
You little trickster you
OOOH, BUT YOU REALLY WERE CUTE, KAJITSU! YOU COULD MAKE SOMEONE GO CRAZY! ♡
HEY!
CACKLE
BUT LOOK HOW YOU TURNED OUT IN THE END!
UGH, DON'T SAY SOMETHING SO GROSS!
AFTER THAT, WE BROKE UP, SO
...IN A WAY, IT WAS ALMOST LIKE I MARRIED YOU! ♡

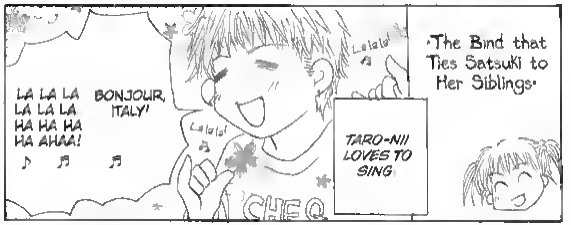
The wise man of the house
(His reputation among the readers)
LOTTA RED MARKS THIS MONTH
Our Household Account Book
Income
Expenses (Food)
WE HAVE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT RUMIKO'S WASTEFUL HABITS
PLOP
PHEW
WHAT A HASSLE

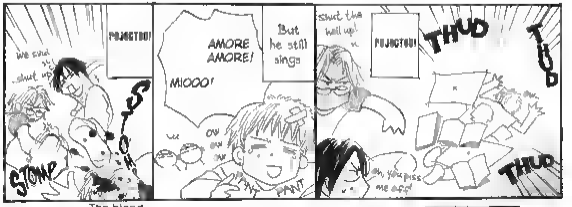
WITHOUT TELLING US?
ONII-CHAN'S...
WITHDRAWING MONEY EVERY MONTH?
Kajitsu, c'mere for a sec
Hm?
WHEN I ASKED TARO ABOUT IT...
...HE SOUNDED SO SAD...
Hmmm...
MAYBE IT'S PAYMENT FOR THAT WEIRD GUITAR HE'S ALWAYS STRUMMING!
MAYBE IT'S A LOAN
My memories of me still play in my heart!
Oh, Japan Best Dear Blue Heart
I love s when song making and sing writing
I THOUGHT THE SAME THING
I KNOW
...AND THEN.
THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE ONII-CHAN AT ALL! IT'S A LIE!
I'M SORRY! JUST OVER-LOOK IT, PLEASE!
PLEASE! SOME STUFF HAPPENED!
BOW
BOW
BOW
I DON'T GET IT
YOU PROBABLY DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT YET, SATSUKI
TO BE HONEST, I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT MY FAMILY
BUT I KNOW
...THAT I LOVE TARO-NII, AND MAMA, AND ONEE-CHAN, AND NA-CHAN, AND THIS HOUSE
I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT'D BE NICE..
...TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE BLOOD RELATIVE
PAT
PAT

...I DIDN'T EVEN STOP TO THINK ABOUT TARO.
THE HOUSE HAS BEEN SO CALM LATELY...
DON'T LEAVE US, ONII-CHAN
EVEN IF WE BECOME SEPARATED..
...SO THAT WE CAN'T SEE EACH OTHER ANYMORE...
"...TO HAVE AT LEAST ONE BLOOD RELATIVE."

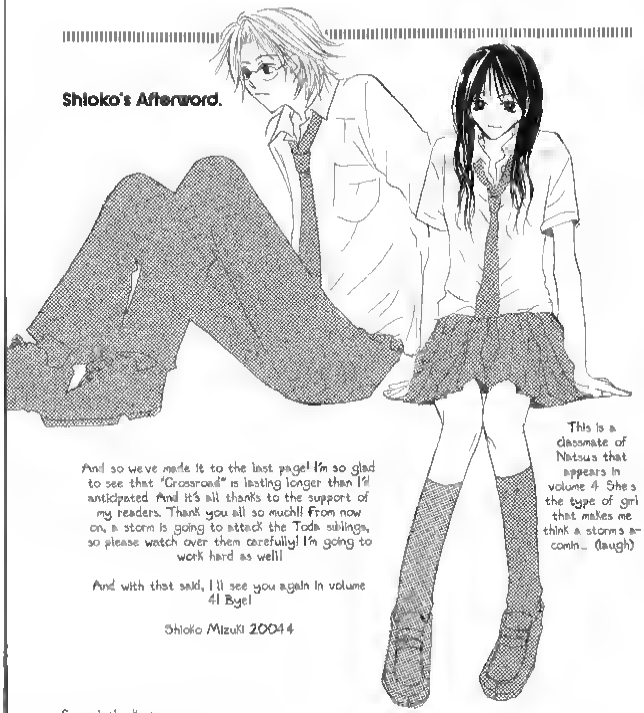
...EXPENSES FOR REARING AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD!
...I REALIZED THAT IT COULD BE...
STUNNED
"I ALWAYS THOUGHT IT'D BE NICE..."
UGH! KNOCK IT OFF, KAJITSU!
FROTH FROTH FROTH
TARO HAS AN ILLEGITIMATE CHILD!?

Satsuki-chan's Record of Struggles 2


LA LA LA LA LA LA HA HA HA HA AHAA!
BONJOUR, ITALY!
Lalala!
Lalala!
TARO-NII LOVES TO SING.
CHE
·The Bind that Ties Satsuki to Her Siblings·



Shioko's Afterword.



This is a classmate of Natsus that appears in volume 4. She's the type of girl that makes me think a storm's a-comin'. (laugh)

And so we've made it to the last page! I'm so glad to see that "Crossroad" is lasting longer than I'd anticipated. And it's all thanks to the support of my readers. Thank you all so much!! From now on, a storm is going to attack the Toda siblings, so please watch over them carefully! I'm going to work hard as well!

And with that said, I'll see you again in volume 4! Bye!

Shioko Mizuki 2004

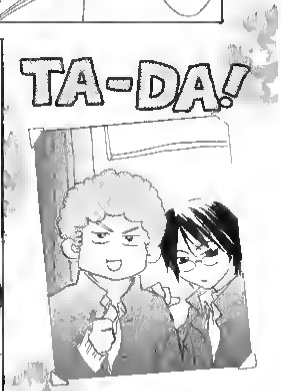
Special thanks to.
Kise-san, Akane-chan, Ari-chan, Hou-chan, Megumi-chan, Miho-chan, Kozawa-san, and my editor.
Thank you so much!!!

Crossroad volume 3 / end

Shioko Mizuki c/o Audrey Taylor
5737 Kanan Rd #591
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

Please send something if you like

Cha-cha-cha and Shake it Shake it



The End.

In the next steamy volume of Crossroad...

Translator's Notes

Pg. 85

Kabuki-niku -- *Kabuki-niku* is a type of restaurant where you're seated at a table with a grill in it and you're given a bunch of meat and other cool stuff to cook up yourself right on the grill.

Pg. 126

Judy Ongg is a star who was raised in Japan but born in Taiwan, so one could say that her heart is split between two countries. Likewise, Tokihito seems to be dividing his heart between two girls.

Pg. 126

Even if I -- Cough -- I Am Alone, is the name of a play by Yamashita Zen. It won the Kyoto Arts Center Theatre Award in 2004.

Pg. 164

Chat room plans are common in Japan. Cell phone users can pay money to message with their friends in a chat room-like environment, but it'll end up costing the user a ton of money.

Pg. 180

The Fukai, also known as "The Sea of Corruption," is a wasteland tainted with poison in Hayao Miyazaki's epic anime *Nausicaa* (for which he also wrote a dense, dramatic manga version). The heroine of the story, Nausicaa, finds out in the course of the story that the wasteland was created by an apocalyptic war that poisoned the earth centuries before. The Fukai, creeping ever closer to what remains of human civilization, can only be kept at bay temporarily with the use of fire.

crossroad

Less than siblings, more than friends...

Life in the Toda household is getting more complicated by the minute! With no parental figure to control her dating habits, Kajitsu finds herself on a romantic evening out with her favorite teacher, Akai-sensei, secretly hoping he'll make her forget the one boy she can't have! Meanwhile her dearest step-brother Natsu is faced with the temptation of opening her private diary. Will he expose Kajitsu's deepest fantasies about him?

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